Est in cœlis qui ambulat in terra.

Augustin.

'Earth's crammed with heaven
And every common bush afire with God.'

Aurora Leigh.

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MAN

AND HIS DWELLING PLACE.

AN ESSAY TOWARDS THE INTERPRETATION OF NATURE.

By JAMES HINTON,

AUTHOR OF "LIFE IN NATURE," "THOUGHTS ON HEALTH, AND SOME OF ITS CONDITIONS," ETC.

A NEW EDITION REVISED.

LONDON:
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1872.

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"As for the possibility, they are ill discoverers who think there is no land when they can see nothing but sea."—Lord Bacon. *On the Advancement of Learning.*

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There was an old man who had abundance of gold. And the sound of the gold was pleasant to his ears, and his eye delighted in its brightness. By day he thought of gold, and his dreams were of gold by night. His hands were full of gold, and he rejoiced in the multitude of his chests. But he was faint with hunger, and his trembling limbs shivered beneath his rags. No kind hand ministered to him, nor cheerful voices made music in his home.

And there came a child to the old man, and said : Father, I have found a secret. We are rich. You shall not be hungry and miserable any more. Gold will buy all things. Then the old man was wroth and said : Would you take from me my gold?

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PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION.

It is fourteen years since this book was written; necessarily, therefore, though the main outlines of the thought still command my belief, there were many things in it which inadequately expressed my present views. These I have endeavoured to amend, but more by omitting topics not essential to the elucidation of the main position of the volume than by additions, which could hardly have failed to betray the weaknesses they were meant to supplement. The book is therefore shorter than it was, and I hope more clear.

There is one point, however, on which a distinct explanation is desirable. When I wrote the book my feeling was (I suppose the prevalent one) that a difference, even a contrast, exists between man's intellectual and his moral life: that there is a want in respect to the latter which does not exist in respect to the former; so that while his intellectual progress has been a consistent advance, an intelligible living process, his intellectual constitution being perfectly

adapted to the world in which he lives, his moral nature is different: that this is imperfect, and needs for its perfectness another world and a different order. This thought I have seen reason to change. To me, now, it seems established by abundant evidence that man's moral and intellectual nature are alike, and his moral and intellectual progress strictly parallel. The failures which mark his moral life have their counterparts — without marring its perfectness—in his intellectual life. So that, as satisfactory and beautiful as is the one, so beautiful and so perfectly a subject for joyful contemplation is the other: that they live indeed a common life, with common failures and common victories, and have before them a common destiny of secured and perfect triumph. The contrast between them is one of *period*, not one of nature or of end.

The evidence for this belief is not here to be discussed; but it was necessary for me to state the change in my convictions, because I think that the contrary feeling (though it is nowhere expressed as an opinion) so pervaded the volume that it was hardly possible to put aside all trace of it.

JAMES HINTON.

London, December 1, 1871.

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

THE reception of this book, both by the public and by those who have passed a critical judgment upon it, has been so much more favourable than I anticipated, that I am glad to have an opportunity of expressing my grateful appreciation of the candour and generosity with which it has been treated. Especially my thanks are due to those who, while sympathizing with my aims, have pointed out what have appeared to them to be defects in my arguments. Of many of those defects no one can be more sensible than myself, nor can I look without regret upon the faults of grouping and detail with which, I am conscious, the work abounds. But being convinced that in their main principles the views herein advocated are true, and being strongly fortified in that belief by kind tokens of assent received from many quarters, and from individuals whose approbation it is a proud satisfaction to have won, I venture still to submit them to the judgment of the

public, trusting that in the future, as in the past, the interest and importance of the theme will outweigh the deficiencies of the advocate. I know quite well I am not equal to the just treatment of these subjects; I never thought I was; and therefore the detection of innumerable shortcomings in my work does not afflict me with any kind of despair. Almost I am glad, rather, that the handling should be unworthy of the topic, that so the question which I would submit to the reader's judgment may be commended to him solely by its own intrinsic weight.

It would be impossible for me here sufficiently to notice the arguments which have been urged against my views. But I may, perhaps, briefly refer to a few points in respect to which my meaning appears to have been misunderstood. I have seemed to some to represent *knowledge*—a mere intellectual enlightenment—as the one thing necessary for man, or, at least to place my chief reliance on such enlightenment. Nothing can be farther from my thought. I believe I place such knowledge exactly where St. Paul placed it when he asked, "How shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard?"

It has been objected that we have not any faculties by which we can gain true knowledge. Of this I need only say, that the question does not affect my present object, one way or the other. I only argue for a change in our way of thinking; in fact, for a different application of the faculties we are now using. The reader can easily decide for himself, whether he can or cannot think as I suggest.

I believe that the defect in man, which I seek to prove, is the same with the death of which the New Testament speaks in describing our present state. I cannot, therefore, forego the use of the terms Life and Death. Nor do I think that any advantage would be gained by foregoing them; for I believe that no one who assents to the thought will feel the words to be otherwise than strictly and most impressively appropriate.

Whether or not the doctrine of this volume satisfies the conscience, I can only appeal to the conscience of the reader. It comes nearer to satisfying mine than any other. It does indeed, to my feeling, retain and intensify all that elsewhere meets the demands of the conscience. For this reason chiefly I value it, and believe that it must prevail. For conscience, we well know, is the ruler in the human soul. But if the reader find that it does not satisfy *his* conscience, let him reject it. No voice more earnestly than mine would entreat him, in such case, to regard it as a delusion and a snare.

The design of the volume was simply to give expression to certain convictions that had gradually grown up in my mind until they pressed upon it with overwhelming force. I felt that a doctrine, legitimately arising out of studies which seemed purely scientific in their aim, possessed the highest religious significance, and not only promised, but gave a solution of some difficulties that had long perplexed the human mind, and even of some that had been pronounced insoluble. I could not do otherwise than

attempt to utter what I thus perceived. The utterance must have been stammering and feeble, for the ideas of which I sought to be the medium oppressed me with their vastness. I did not grasp them ; they held and used me rather. My fault is that I have been so imperfectly their instrument.

The time has been long anticipated, when the results of the modern investigation of nature shall receive a higher interpretation, and their relations to moral and religious questions come into clearer light. Nor have there been wanting indications of a belief that, when that time shall come, it will be rich in benefits, and will enable men to take a position which had previously been beyond their reach. Humbly I believe that that time has already begun. It needs only that we should be willing to go where a clear light shines, and an open path awaits us.

Not that I have sought to introduce scientific dogmas into the sphere of religion, or have attempted to explain the mysteries of religion by any scientific light. Nothing could have been farther from my seeking ; few things could be in my opinion more irrational. But I think I have seen that science does of itself become religious, and affirm a doctrine respecting man which is one with the fundamental affirmation of the Christian records. I cannot help seeing this, nor believing that others will see it also. I cannot help believing that others also will rejoice to see it, as I rejoice.

Surely our having despaired of a good, is no reason that we should refuse to accept it when it comes.

And if we have schooled ourselves, taught by a long experience, to believe that our intellectual and our religious lives must always be alien from each other, if not opposed, we need not therefore be the more reluctant to allow them to be in unison when they do visibly unite. The question is one of fact.

When I think of this matter, I seem to see man, like an instinct-led creature, doing a work which he neither designs nor knows. Under the constraint of various impulses and desires, he gathers laboriously together the materials, and constructs the edifice, of knowledge; under impulses which consciously tend no farther than the mere construction, and desires which find their gratification in immediate results. But more is done than he aims to do. Man makes science as the bird builds its nest: with instincts satisfied in the work itself, but with ends reaching far beyond. With fragmentary sticks, and straws, and moss, and feathers from its own ungrudging bosom, cunningly built up, doubtless with delight and inward satisfaction in the doing, the bird has formed for itself unwittingly a nest — a home adapted to its highest life. Does God thus take thought for birds, and has He not granted to man also the privilege of doing more than he designs? Should it surprise us to find that in fulfilling desires of their own, mankind also have wrought out a work of higher use?

There are two classes of persons to whom I hoped that the thoughts contained in this volume might be welcome: those who feel painfully the weight of the moral problems presented by the world, on the one

hand; and on the other, those who desire to see a more satisfactory and more hopeful solution of the problems which the intellect encounters. If any of these find help or light in what I have suggested, I am more than satisfied.

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INTRODUCTION.

He who has seen obscurities which appeared impenetrable in physical and mathematical science suddenly dispelled, and the most barren and unpromising fields of inquiry converted, as if by inspiration, into rich and inexhaustible springs of knowledge and power on a simple change of our point of view, or by merely bringing to bear upon them some principle which it never occurred before to try, will surely be the very last to acquiesce in any dispiriting prospects of either the present or future destinies of mankind.

SIR J. HERSCHELL: *Discourse on Natural Philosophy.*

IT has been well observed that the child and the savage invent an explanation of everything they do not understand, whilst the man whose powers are matured and disciplined investigates. He has learnt to be patient, and to wait for grounds of knowledge before he supposes himself to know. Thus progress is made. From investigation comes discovery. Our partial and incompetent reason, brought into contact with the great facts of nature, becomes itself enlarged. For the natural suppositions by which man explains the unknown are not equal to the scope of things. They express himself, his ignorance, his limited relations.

All advance in knowledge is a deliverance of man from himself. Slowly and painfully he learns that he is not the measure of truth, that the fact may be very different from the appearance to him. The lesson is hard, but the reward is great. So he escapes from illusion and error, from ignorance and failure. Directing his thoughts and energies no more according to his own impressions, but according to the truth of things, he finds himself in possession of an unimaginable power alike of understanding and of acting. To a truly marvellous extent he is the lord of nature.

But the conditions of this lordship are inexorable. They are the surrender of prepossessions, the abandonment of assumptions, the confession of ignorance. Hence in all passing from error to truth we learn something respecting ourselves, as well as respecting the object of our study. Simultaneously with our better knowledge we recognize the reason of our ignorance, and perceive what defect on our part has caused us to think wrongly.

Either the world is such as it appears to us, or it is not. If it be not, there must be some condition affecting ourselves which modifies the impression that we receive from it. And this condition must be operative on all mankind: it must relate to man as a whole rather than to individual men.

So far as we could judge without reference to experience, either of these cases might be supposed. There is perhaps no sufficient reason, *à priori*, why

we should not imagine that the appearance might correspond with the fact of things; and, on the other hand, we know that circumstances which affect ourselves do continually modify our perception of objects, so that their appearance differs more or less considerably from that which they truly are. And in some cases this difference of the appearance from the fact is very great. Perhaps nothing can be more unlike the planets than the appearance they present to us; or, to make the case more striking, let us imagine our own earth viewed from one of the other planets. Can anything be more different from this dark solid varied mass than the bright spot it would appear?

Therefore, when we approach inquiries relating to nature, and the true relations which we bear to the universe, we must be treading on unsafe ground if we assume, without investigation, one of these possible events to be true to the exclusion of the other. We cannot be sure that the world does not differ in extreme degree from its appearance. All experience combines to teach us caution. The history of human error is a history of the taking it for granted that things are as they appear.

Speaking generally, we may say that all speculation hitherto has been based upon the supposition that the appearance of the world does correspond with the fact. All systems are attempts to represent the order of things on that natural supposition. And not only is this the case with philosophical systems, it is equally true of the ordinary and unregulated ideas which lie in every man's mind. All our conceptions are based

on the implied postulate that the world is as it appears.

How far the result is satisfactory each man must judge for himself. But it should not be forgotten that another course is open. If we could recognize any element in our condition that should have the effect of causing the appearance of the world in which we are to differ from the fact, the issue of our speculative labours might at least be different from that which it is at present.

That appearances should be deceptive has an evident basis in nature. For the appearance of every object, or the way in which it primarily impresses us, depends upon our relations in respect to it. But these relations, infinitely varied as they are, must be ascertained by the study of those objects themselves. We have not any intuitive knowledge of them. Therefore as our relations to the world become more widely known to us we are constantly learning to recognize, as the cause of our perceptions, facts which are widely different from that which those perceptions at first suggest. Nor do we feel in doing this any embarrassment or difficulty: it is the very thing which gives to our conceptions clearness and simplicity.

For right knowledge, it is necessary that the relations between ourselves and the objects that affect us should be clearly understood: that we should know why, the fact being as it is, the appearance must be such as it is to us. The planets appear so small because of our distance, so bright because of the laws of reflection of light: they appear to be

revolving around the earth because we are being moved. Knowing these things, it is no longer strange to us to think of those specks of light as orbs kindred to our own: or of the stars, so like them in respect to sense, as yet vaster worlds glowing with a radiance of their own. We entirely mistake if we imagine that there is any difficulty to the human mind in recognizing under any sensuous appearance a fact how unlike soever to that appearance. Nothing is more natural: to nothing is our native tendency more strong. The discovery of facts beneath appearances is the very work of the intellect, and is indeed but the recognition of our own relations to the universe. But there is always a difficulty in first taking this step: that which, when it is familiar, it seems impossible to doubt, when it was new seemed not less impossible to believe. The source of this difficulty lies in our very constitution. For we necessarily think that an appearance corresponds to the fact until by increasing knowledge we have learnt otherwise. The intellect demands that every appearance should be accounted for. Every impression on us has some cause; and we necessarily suppose a cause correspondent to every such impression until some other fact be shown to which it may be more reasonably referred. This constitutes the formation of hypotheses; which are accordingly necessities of our mental being. Thus before astronomy was understood, men necessarily supposed that there existed in the heavens a small bright disc such as the moon appears. This was a *hypothesis*, which the recognition of the true moon sets aside.

Hence arises one chief difficulty in the advance of knowledge. For it is the proper work of the intellect in removing ignorance to connect our impressions with facts different from those which are first suggested to us. New truths therefore always come, not only with an aspect of strangeness, but in apparent opposition to received and established beliefs; sometimes in opposition to views held sacred, or fundamental to all knowledge. The hypothesis, or cause that had been supposed in ignorance in order to account for the appearance, has a hold upon the mind as if it were a fact certainly known. It is the hardest thing possible for men to remember that such hypothesis has no foundation except their own ignorance. The fact that they have been obliged to suppose it, and that to have denied it, without showing how the impressions of which they are conscious could be otherwise produced, would have been to leave a ridiculous vacancy and to run in the face of common sense, often overpowers all other considerations. The demand upon them to give up that which they have considered as of all things the most certain, is too much. Evidence is of little avail against that feeling. The utmost simplicity, beauty, and necessity in the new opinion often go for nothing in comparison with it.

And there is, besides, always this argument in favour of a hypothesis that has by long use become established as a truth: it is so natural; it answers so exactly to the impression or appearance which it is used to account for. This must be the case; being

invented for the very purpose of accounting for our impressions, a hypothesis cannot be wanting in exact correspondence with them. In this respect it must have an advantage, and a very powerful one in relation to some of our strongest feelings, over the truth which seeks to supplant it. For that truth demands reflection and thought; it is in a certain sense opposed to our first natural conceptions, and involves an exercise of reason and a regard to the mutual bearing of various facts. Hence the struggle for the life of a hypothesis is the more prolonged. If the hypothesis be assumed, everything is simple, our impressions need no correcting, and the case is just as it seems. To all this there is nothing to be opposed but the argument that, plausible as that belief may be, investigation and a just use of our powers forbid us to rest in it. The weak part of a hypothesis is not that it does not account for our impressions—this it can hardly fail to do—but that it will not bear investigation. The existence of that which is seen in spectral illusions or in dreams would account perfectly for their occurrence, and we do indeed at first always account for them so. That is the natural hypothesis; but examination proves it impossible, and we have learnt accordingly to assign them to other causes. Which causes, it may be observed, are very far from being such as we should have thought likely.

These are in part the reasons which render the establishment of a new truth so difficult. Every such truth has to encounter a hypothesis which perfectly accounts for the appearances, makes little demand on

the thoughtfulness and reason of men, and, above all, is established as a certain and unassailable truth, based on an experience which cannot deceive. It is no wonder that under these circumstances false views of nature should have struggled long with advancing knowledge. We should not complain that it has been so: that were to find fault with the very faculties and mental tendencies through which alone we have been made capable of learning.

Especially we should avoid the injustice with which it is too customary to treat the past. We are apt to think that the men who strove so long against opinions which are to us almost self-evident must have been less open to conviction and less willing to abide by the results of investigation than ourselves. But herein we do a twofold wrong: we cast undeserved reproach upon the dead, and inflict a deeper injury upon ourselves. Reading history so, making it feed our own self-confidence and pride, is sadly to abuse its lesson. Men do not alter: in these days they are no more willing to give up what they consider settled facts and principles than they were of old. In all ages men have been willing to apply principles that have been proved true, to do again in other forms that which has been done before; in no age willing, or likely to be willing, to do more. In the past we may read the present: we forget what those men whose errors we pity were called upon to do; we forget how much we owe them for what they did. They were called upon to set aside the very principles on which their mental life was moulded, to abandon, as false,

convictions which seemed to carry away with them the entire basis on which a sound judgment or a steadfast faith could be sustained. And they did it. Trusting in God, the world has given up over and over again well nigh all its most assured convictions; trusting in God that the fact must be better than their thought. Is it for us to boast ourselves? are we willing to do as much again?

The truth is that every generation of men thinks that it has at last arrived at the ultimate principles of knowledge, and that whatever mental revolutions may have been necessary before, no more will be needed thereafter. It must be so. The very fact of men honestly striving to do their best involves it. Man cannot foresee the future; his little horizon must seem to include the scope of heaven and earth. Ever, therefore, he is anxious to know more in accordance with his own ideas, but he little anticipates conceiving differently. Yet it might not be impossible to draw from history a lesson that should make us truly wiser, if we would remember that the thing which has been is the criterion of that which is likely to be; and that, as other ages, so we also might be called upon to admit ourselves in error in some of those opinions in respect to which we have been most sure that we are right.

The idea which is commonly entertained of nature is the best conception that men have been able to form respecting it, in the absence of definite, or at least of complete knowledge. Accordingly it corresponds

precisely to their first natural impressions, which indeed it is constructed to represent as closely as possible. It is therefore conformable to all experience that the advance of knowledge should bring men into collision with this conception, and that it should exist as an obstacle to a truer interpretation of the facts. If it be the case that our impressions fall short of the truth, then of necessity the ideas to which we have had recourse to account for those impressions must be inadequate. They must embody our ignorance, and differ essentially from those which we should form if the true relations which exist between ourselves and the world were known to us. In a word, our conception of nature is a hypothesis.

Like other hypotheses, however, it has had its necessity and its use, nor can it be set aside until the truth be known—the fact itself, and the reason that we are affected by it as we are. The question which demands an answer in respect to the world is at least susceptible of a distinct and explicit statement. We require such a knowledge of our own relation to the fact that truly exists as shall enable us to understand how that fact, being such as it is, should affect us as it does.

Many questions of an abstract nature suggest themselves here. Volumes have been occupied in discussing whether such knowledge be possible; the nature of perception and of consciousness. But the sole answer that will be attempted now is a practical one; for the question is one that must be solved by experience and not by anticipation. It is submitted

that man's relation to the fact of the universe may be ascertained by investigation, and that, when that relation is understood, it may be known also what that fact must be, and why it affects man as it does: and that this knowledge is obtained through thinking more humbly of ourselves; through giving up our self-assertion, and being willing to admit that man may be wanting in that which he most confidently assumes that he possesses.

A brief outline of the view that will be advocated is here subjoined. It is thrown into the form of propositions or theses, as a statement of that which is afterwards to be discussed. This plan has been adopted in order that the conception may be presented in its connexion as a whole before any part is treated in detail.

Briefly, the position maintained is this: That the study of nature leads to the conclusion that there is a DEFECTIVENESS in man which modifies his perception; that the universe is not truly correspondent to his impressions, but is of a more perfect and higher kind.

To judge rightly of nature, therefore, we must not be guided by our own impressions merely, but must remember man's defectiveness. For if man be defective, his apprehension and feeling of nature will be inadequate, and that which he feels to exist will differ from the true existence by defect.

Whether this simple change in our point of view, the application of the principle of considering the defectiveness of man in our judgment of nature, have

the power of "dispelling obscurities which have appeared impenetrable, and converting an unpromising field of inquiry into a rich spring of knowledge and power," may appear hereafter. It has an immediate bearing, thus:

1. Nature (or the universe, or the world) is not truly and in itself such as it is to man's feeling. That which man feels to be differs from that which is, apart from him, *by defect.*

We perceive the world as possessing certain qualities, or as existing in a certain way which we call physical. We term it the *physical* world.

This mode of existence involves inertness. That which is physical does not act, except passively as it is acted upon. Inertness is inaction.

That which is inert, therefore, differs from that which is not inert by *defect* (by absence of action or of active power).

2. We cannot avoid conceiving another mode of existence besides that which is inert. We conceive of Being which possesses a true, spontaneous and primary activity. This is necessary, since there must be such a true activity, or there could not be any action at all.

To this truly active mode of Being the word *spiritual* has been applied; and in this sense that word will here be used. That to which inertness does not belong, but which truly acts in a way in which physical things do not act, is meant by the term spiritual.

The physical, therefore, differs from the spiritual (in this particular of its inertness) *by defect.*

3. It is submitted that it is man's defectiveness which makes him feel the world as thus defective: that nature is not truly inert, but is so to man's feeling by defect in him.

We have conceived nature to be inert, or physical; man to be not inert, or spiritual.

It is submitted that investigation demands that we should correct this natural supposition: and that the perceived inertness or defect in nature is due to man's defectiveness.

4. Either the universe is defective as being without action (inert), or man is defective. There is to *us* an inertness; it determines our whole state. We have to learn whether it be man's or nature's.

SCIENCE gives answer to this question. By it proof is given that the perceived defect must be ascribed to man's condition, and that nature is not truly inert as it is felt to be. His own condition having imposed on man a false opinion respecting the universe, science emancipates him therefrom; it brings man face to face with nature, and makes him know *himself.*

5. The history of science is the attempt of man to understand the universe on the supposition that the inertness (or defect) exists in nature, as it appears to him to exist. But this attempt leads to the result, entirely unforeseen, of transferring the defect to himself; and proving that both the fact of nature and his own state of being are different from that which he supposed.

This result science accomplishes—

1st. By demonstrating an absolute inertness in that which appears, bringing all *phenomena* under the law of passive or physical causation.

2nd. By giving evidence of a fact different from that which appears to us; showing that it deals only with phenomena, and not with the very essence of nature.

It is affirmed, therefore, that inertness does not belong to the essence and true being of nature,* but only to the phenomenon.

It is introduced by man. He perceives defect without him only because there is defect within him.

6. To be inert has the same meaning as to be dead. So we speak of nature, thinking it to be inert, as "dead matter." To say that man introduces inertness into nature, implies a deadness in him: it is to say that he wants life. This is the proposition which is affirmed. This condition which we call our life is not the true life of man.

7. The book that has had greater influence upon the world than all others differs from all others in affirming that man wants life, and in making that statement the basis of all that it contains respecting the past and present and future of mankind.

Science thus pays homage to the Bible. What that book has declared as if with authority so long ago, she has at last deciphered on the page of nature. This is not man's true life.

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* The proof is deferred, not belonging to this place. See Book I. Chap. i.

It is a willing homage. For all men love the Bible: some of those not least who have most felt themselves compelled to oppose it. In every heart the love is deeper than the hatred. For what book has sounded so the depths of experience, or scaled like it the highest pinnacles of thought? What man has not learnt through it better to know himself?

Therefore if the thought that man wants life seem at first strange to the intellectual apprehension, the conscience and the heart respond. This is not our true life. Illusion, and disappointment, and wrong are in it. We ought to be other than we are.

8. The statements of the New Testament respecting the course and history of the world, starting with a deadness in men, end in their being made alive.

We naturally conceive the world to be the scene of man's probation. The Bible represents it as the scene of his redemption. Man is being made alive: rewards and punishment, threatenings and retribution, take their place within and in subordination to this end.

9. That man wants life, means that the true life of man is of another kind from this. It corresponds to that true, absolute Being which he, as he now is, cannot know.

He cannot know it because he is out of relation with it. This is his deadness. To know it is to have life.

10. To that absolute fact of Being the Bible applies the words spiritual and eternal. To be spiritual is to be not inert. To be eternal is to BE.

The unknown fact of nature is the spiritual and eternal world; "the things that are not seen." But man wants that true life which would place him in union with it; therefore to him the world is temporal and physical. He does not know the fact, therefore he feels that to be which is not.

In other words: there is not a physical world and a spiritual world besides, but the spiritual world which alone IS, is physical to man: the physical being the mode in which man, by his defectiveness, perceives the spiritual. We *feel* a physical world to be; but that which IS, is the spiritual world.

The necessary bearings of the conception that has been thus proposed may relieve from the charge of presumption the attempt to comprehend in one view so many things as are included in this volume. That is a task imposed by the nature of the case.

The same remark will apply to the objection that will be felt to the mingling of science and religion. The justification of this proceeding is simply that it is believed to be right.

It may be that the separation of our thoughts concerning things physical and things divine is a disunion of our being, a partition into two imperfect halves of that which rightly constitutes a harmonious whole. The separation has indeed been needful and eminently useful, but only as a temporary expedient; it cannot be a permanent relation. Religion will not unite with a science based on the supposition that man is living and the universe dead; but a science that recognizes deadness in man in that very act

becomes religious. Science is of necessity divorced from religion while it rests in phenomena, but when it takes cognizance of man's relation to that which is not phenomenal, it is reunited to its source.

The union of science and religion is not optional, a thing which may be attempted or avoided. That union is a fact, to which we must conform ourselves. Science is religious. All things are so. There is no object of human activity or interest of which the same thing may not be said. Nothing is unreligious but by error and ignorance: only so long as we do not see what it is, and for what purpose it exists, can any form of activity or of thought be kept apart from our religious life.

For religion is simply that which concerns the very fact and reality of our being. That which constitutes anything religious is its being brought into relation with that fact, and placed in its true bearings. That is religious which is felt and known aright, in its own true nature, and not according to the mere appearance to ourselves.

Religion is the one thing in which all men are interested; the one absorbing inquiry to which no man is indifferent. What am I? what is the world? Why am I here, and what will be the result? What justice, what love, what rightness, what hope, what end? These are questions which no man ceases to ask, or will cease. To these questions if any man give answer, the world listens with credulous and eager ear.

But other interests are partial, and limited, and

transient. They ruffle the surface of our life, but do not stir its depths. Men make them the objects of their devotion, and try to be content, and fill out their emptiness with pomp of words and specious self-congratulation, because they fail in their attempts to deal with those deeper and dearer questions which rack their souls in secret.

BOOK I.

OF SCIENCE.

Nature is the domain of liberty.—*Cosmos.*

MAN AND HIS DWELLING PLACE.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE WORK OF SCIENCE.

PROOF is of three kinds: First, the Logical, which rests on premises and demonstrates that according to the laws of the human mind a certain conclusion follows.

2nd. The Historical, which shows that if the case be as affirmed, the course of human thought in relation to it must have been such as it has been. It accounts for the rise and progress of belief.

3rd. That which might be called the Expository, which, taking the phenomena as they appear, gives a simple statement of the fact which carries its own conviction. Such is the evidence on which the Copernican astronomy is received by the mass of educated men.

Each of these modes of proof is indispensable; but they are by no means of equal authority. The

logical is principally useful as a means for advancing knowledge. Its conclusions can never have more certainty than the premises, and its end is chiefly to free us from false ideas by leading us to false results when we reason from them. It makes the latent error manifest. Logic has less to do with that which is true than with that which it is reasonable for us to think with our particular amount of knowledge. The historical and expository proof have more positive value. The light which they throw upon that which has been and which is, gives them an authority to a certain degree independent of ourselves.

The argument from premises to conclusions will be the least employed here, not because it is inapplicable, but because it is the least appropriate. It neither can nor should produce conviction. If an improbable conclusion be enforced by such reasoning, the premises are immediately suspected ; and rightly so. It will be sought, rather, to unfold the conception that man is such as he is by a want of his true and perfect being, and that he is being raised from this state by having the true life imparted to him ; and so to exhibit this conception in its relation to the facts of human life that it shall be felt to be the solution of the problem of humanity, the true interpretation of history, the key both to what men have thought and what they are.

If it can be made manifest that the deadness and redemption of man is the reconciliation of all enmities, the oneness of all opposites ; that it demands of no man that he should abandon that which he has

revered as sacred or valued as true, but is rather the perfecting of all these things; that it demands a willingness not to give up, but only to receive; putting new meaning into our habitual words, new life into our daily work, and making light to be where darkness has been; this is the evidence on which reliance will be placed.

Two or three observations will serve to guard against some possible sources of misapprehension.

1. The first of these relates to the nature of Language. Words necessarily express to all persons their own conceptions. Hence the difficulty of conveying by them ideas that are new, even in any branch of ordinary knowledge. Much greater is this difficulty when the question relates, as now, to the entire conception of existence. No word can be used that is not already fixed as it were to a different class of ideas, so that in its new use it may either fail to convey the meaning, or seem to be misapplied. This difficulty is inherent in the subject, and is certainly much increased by want of skill on the writer's part. Perhaps, however, it will not be found greater than any one who will seek for the meaning, and make allowance for deficiencies in respect to words, whether unavoidable or inadvertent, will easily surmount.

In no respect does greater embarrassment arise from words than from the various use of the word *To be:* employed as it is to express either true existence or mere appearance: *absolute*, as it is termed, and *relative*. We say of God, He IS; but we use the same word of a shadow, of which the essence is

that there *is not* light. The being of a shadow is only an absence, yet we cannot mark this by the words which express existence. We cannot deny that a shadow "exists." It exists as a shadow, or has such existence as a shadow has. We say there *is* darkness, so expressing negation or denial. This source of error must be remembered and watched against; it cannot, in the present state of language, be avoided.

"It is a rule," says that great master of discourse, Lord Bacon, "that whatsoever science is not consonant to presuppositions must pray in aid of similitudes. For those whose conceptions are different from popular opinions have a double labour, the one to make themselves conceived, and the other to prove and demonstrate; so that it is of necessity with them to have recourse to similitudes and translations to express themselves." The use, therefore, of illustrations and comparisons drawn from sensuous things, in the following pages, is not designed to snatch an assent from the fancy which the calmer judgment should withhold. Nor do the points of difference which must exist in all similitudes from that which they are used to illustrate, imply an attempt to argue from one thing to another, disregarding the diversity of the cases. The similitudes are used to aid the conception of the thought.

2. That man wants life may seem to exclude individual responsibility, and certainly no opinion can be true that sets aside the moral instincts and does violence to the conscience. It may suffice here to

state that our actions, in so far as they are our own, are held to be not necessary, and that we are, therefore, responsible for them. The doctrine of man's deadness, so far from diminishing, strengthens and renders more profound the sense of sin.

3. It may seem unnatural to speak of a conscious existence as a state of death. But what is affirmed is, that a sensational existence, such as ours, is not the Life of MAN; that a consciousness of physical life does itself imply a deadness. The affirmations, that we are living men, and that man has not true and absolute Life, are not opposed. Life is a relative term. Our possession of a conscious life in relation to the things that we feel around us is itself the evidence of Man's defect of Life in a higher and truer sense.

Let a similitude make the thought more clear. Are not we, as individuals, at rest, steadfast in space; evidently so to our own consciousness, demonstrably so in relation to the objects around us? But is man at rest in space? By no means. We are all partakers of a motion. Nay, if we were truly at rest we could not have this relative steadfastness, we should not be at rest to the things around us. Our relative rest, and consciousness of steadfastness, depend upon our being not at rest. These are moving things, to which he only can be steadfast who is moving too. Even such is the life of which we have consciousness. We have a life in relation to physical things, because man wants life. True life in man would alter his relation to them. They could

not be the realities any more, he could not have a life in them. As rest to moving things is not truly rest, but motion; so life to inert things is not truly life, but deadness.

It is Science which has emphatically prepared the way for this mode of thought. The study of Nature has led men to the conviction that all which we perceive or can picture in our thoughts as constituting the physical world is but the appearance to us of some existence to a true apprehension of which we do not attain; so that we have a consciousness of being in a world different from that which truly exists.

The word phenomenon has been introduced into science to denote this fact: that the true essence of nature is different from that which we can know by sense or conceive by intellect; and that the things which we perceive or think, do not correspond to the very fact of being. Phenomena are appearances.*

But if these things which we know be but phenomena, then it follows that we feel them wrongly. For we feel them as realities; they seem to determine our whole life and condition. Thus our perception and feeling are not true, and we lie under illusions which have relation not to our intellect alone, but to our very being. We cannot separate them from ourselves. While man is such as he is, that which can only be appearance must be reality to him. He feels himself in conscious relation only with that which is not the very essence, the truth of being.

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* From the Greek, *φαίνομαι*, *to appear.*

This is the plain teaching of our science stripped of technicality.

But men could not understand that this was their true relation to nature, until through long and varied experience the conviction had been forced upon them. It is natural to us to suppose, and indeed to feel absolutely sure, that we do know the true fact of nature, and that it is such as it appears. That it should be so is indeed implied in the meaning of the word "appear." That alone is an appearance which men, until they have learnt otherwise, naturally suppose to be the fact.

And it must have been more difficult for men to recognize this fact, because of the bearing it has upon themselves; for if the phenomena that sense perceives, and that science investigates, are not truly existing, then we are under illusion in such a way as must entirely alter our own conception of ourselves. The true being of man cannot be in us. The true being of nature is hidden from our eyes because there is not that within which answers to it.

It is a remarkable thing that men should have rested in the assertion that we cannot know the essential being of nature, without recognizing that this fact necessarily places us under illusion, and causes us to attribute being to that which does not possess it. We understand, however, why they should have failed adequately to perceive this consequence of their position when we see what the feeling of non-existing things to be the existing ones involves. For a life consciously passed among things that are

not, and in events therefore that are but in seeming too, cannot be the true life of man. The proofs which have led men to recognize the difference of their perception from the actual existence of Nature are of many kinds, and have been urged in various ways. But I shall not dwell on these, preferring to confine myself to the one position that Nature is not, and cannot be, as Science has heretofore represented it, wanting in action, or inert. If, however, this idea itself, of the inertness of Nature, be not familiar, it may suffice to refer to the now universal conviction that every material change must have a cause, and that none can originate itself. This is what is meant by inertness; it is the basis of the belief in the *order* of the physical world.

We feel, then, that the phenomenon is inert, and controlled by passive necessity. The question is, therefore, whether this feeling on our part corresponds to the truth of nature as it is: whether that which exists, apart from man, be thus inert, or our feeling be due to man's own state of being.

1. Inertness necessarily belongs to all phenomena. That which is only *felt* to be, and does not truly or absolutely exist, must have the character of inaction. It must be passive. A phenomenon must be inert *because it is a phenomenon.* We cannot argue from inertness in that which appears to inertness in that which IS. Of whatsoever kind the very essence of nature may be, if it be unknown the phenomenon must be inert. We have no ground, therefore, in the

inertness we feel, for affirming of nature that it *is* inert. We must feel it so, by virtue of our known relation to it, as not perceiving its essence.

2. The question therefore rests entirely upon its own evidence. Since we have no reason from the inertness of the "phenomenal" for inferring the inertness of the "essential," can we know whether that essential be inert or not? We can know. Inertness, as being absolute inaction, cannot belong to that which truly is. Being and absolute inaction are contraries. Inertness, therefore, must be a property by which the phenomenal differs from the essential or absolute.

3. Again, Nature does act: it acts upon us, or we could not perceive at all. The true being of nature is active therefore. That we feel it otherwise shows that we do not feel it as it is. We must look for the source of nature's apparent or felt inertness in man's condition.*

Our own state has affected our feeling, and has necessitated our thinking of the world as it is not. Universally this principle is recognised in respect to individual things: that our own condition affects our

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* The perplexity that is always felt respecting perception, and man's conscious relation to the physical world, whenever the question is agitated, arises in great part from the incongruous supposition that *inert* things *act* upon us. It is evident, as said above, that in whatever world man might be, *if he were conscious only of phenomena*, that is, if he did not perceive the essential being of it, he must be conscious of being in an inert world. That condition carries with it, unavoidably, the conscious perception of inertness. We may not, therefore, assume any other cause for our perception of nature as inert.

feeling, and that we must have regard to that condition as an element in judging. The application of this principle to the investigation of the world as a whole and to conditions affecting all mankind, is all that is contended for. Before we can know by our feeling of the world what it truly is, we must understand man's condition in relation to it.*

Here is in an emphatic sense the work of Science. By investigation of that which he feels to be, man learns his own condition, and so becomes able to interpret the appearance of the world. For men, pursuing their own ends, fulfil God's. All human activity bears witness to a larger purpose in it than any that is consciously present to the worker; often the object sought being of little value compared with the result that is achieved.

For many generations, now, the chief energies of thinking men have been devoted to physical research. Unwearied has been the diligence, patient and self-sacrificing the toil, that have been brought to the task; glorious the offerings of self-denial, enthusiasm, life, that have been laid upon that altar. The results may look cold, barely set forth by weight and measure, or clothed in uncouth formulas; but a warm life glows beneath. The dark crater is instinct with fire. For those results the largest hearts of human mould have poured themselves in passionate fervour upon nature, and ecstasies of joy and hope have

* Guarding against what Bacon calls "the Idols of the tribe;" or those errors respecting nature to which we are prone through circumstances which affect all men.

thrilled to weakness frames which no labours could exhaust; for God had moved them. The wonder of His works was as a spell upon them; the mystery and beauty of the universe wrought like a command within. They stretched forth their hands to the Infinite.

And what have they grasped? Some mathematical relations, some undefined ideas about forces, a perception merely of undeviating law? Have they but inaugurated a ceaseless strife between the emotions and the intellect? an everlasting protest of piety against conviction? Must they content themselves with physical advance, and take refuge from perplexity of heart in bridging oceans and annihilating space, the bright visions which lured them on fading like the enchantments of a dream? Is this the end?

Not so. In creating science men have done more than they knew. They have prepared the way for the removal of an illusion. Hence the discord. For the truths of science will not blend with the conceptions we have formed of nature without a shock to ineradicable feelings. The great thought of science is necessity; the human soul demands above all things freedom, not only for itself, but even more for the Power by which the world is governed. Therefore it is that science and religion have been at strife. Our conception of nature as inert would not permit it to be otherwise. The establishment of a necessary connection between natural phenomena has seemed to put a chain upon the hand of God, and substitute a dead mechanism for the living sympathy that men

had found in wave and mountain, in storm and sunshine, in the beauty of the earth and the glory of the sky. The present state of science in the minds of religious men is, for the most part, a result of opposing forces, a compromise between the ideas of physical causation and of the direct action of the Creator. But it need not continue so. This is an embarrassment which arises in the course of advancing knowledge, but which ceases with the misapprehension from which it springs; the explanation of the universe which ignorance has supposed yielding to a juster knowledge. There is not absence of acting in nature, but a want of life in man. Men have naturally believed, indeed, that the sole result of Science would be to enlarge our knowledge of that which appears; to discover the relations of phenomena, and give us control over physical things. But it has an evident adaptation to do more than this; and to make us know ourselves more truly, revealing to us not only that which is without, but that which is within.

There are three words in established use: *appearance, phenomenon* and *fact.* Between appearance and fact there is the widest distinction, they are even opposites. Yet the word phenomenon is used sometimes for one, sometimes for the other. Confusion of thought must result from such a use of words.* But the reason of this vacillating language is, that while

* Coleridge notices "the unconscious irony with which the same things are termed indifferently facts and phenomena."

men are compelled to say that phenomena are but appearances, they do truly think of them as facts or realities; for they are felt by us as real. We speak of things in one way and think of them in another, for we can only truly think of phenomena, as but phenomena, by constantly remembering the falseness of our feeling.

But the right use of these words is distinct and simple. "Appearance" is that which is to our sense, but is not true to our thought; *e.g.* the appearance of the moon is a bright disc. "Phenomenon" is that which is to our senses and our thought mutually correcting and checked by each other; the moon itself therefore is a phenomenon. Fact is that which truly and absolutely exists; the essential BEING of nature, which we cannot think. Fact is that which IS; phenomenon is that which is to our conception; appearance is that which is to our sense. Defect of knowledge makes appearances facts to us; defect of being makes phenomena facts to us. In the true life of man, the fact alone should be the fact to him, and phenomena should be but phenomena instead of being as now, the realities of his existence; even as true knowledge is to know and feel appearances to be but appearances, instead of their being, as they are to ignorance, realities. *Now*, the phenomenon is real to us, moulds and determines all our experience. We express this fact by saying we are the slaves of matter. The discordance of our state with the aspirations and unquenchable assertions of our soul is felt, but not understood. It is want of life in man which makes

the universe physical to us, and subjects us to the tyranny of inert necessities. For nature IS not as we feel it. Thus do we perceive and feel another different fact; but not thus is it to be felt for ever. Life is to be given to man, a life whereby he, being more, shall feel more truly. The instincts which assert for man a truer, worthier being may assume a loftier tone. Science is their friend and servant, not their enemy; revealing deadness in respect to man, it explains the mystery of his present state; adds emphasis to the prophecy of a different future.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE LAWS OF NATURE.

These three be the true stages of knowledge, and they are as the three acclamations, Sancte, Sancte, Sancte ! holy in the description or dilation of his works ; holy in the connection or concatenation of them ; and holy in the union of them in a perpetual and uniform law.

LORD BACON : *Of the Advancement of Learning.*

WITH true action we necessarily connect moral conceptions. The ideas cannot be dissociated. And that to which moral conceptions apply is by all termed spiritual. For this reason the fact of nature has been affirmed to be the spiritual world. That it is so, follows from the proposition that inertness does not belong to it. The argument would be the same, if there were insuperable difficulties in conceiving how man should be made to perceive the inert phenomenal world by his presence, in a defective state, in the spiritual world. The proof that it must be so would be none the less complete. But this is by no means the case. On the contrary, the light which the facts of our experience receive from the perception that it is truly a spiritual world with which we are in relation, and that it is physical to us

only through man's defectiveness — that its being physical to us denotes, and is evidence of, a dead state of man, which else we should not know—is stronger demonstration than any that rests merely on the intellect. For this evidence embraces all our faculties, and appeals to all our being; revealing the source of our inward strife, and taking away perplexities by demonstrating how they must have arisen.

For not only do we thus understand why man is in a physical world; but we understand also how it is that we have conceived two modes of being: one low, inert, passing; the other higher, free, eternal. This is because man has believed the phenomenal to have true existence, believing his own deadness to be, as he perceives it, in that which is around him. But that our experience is truly due to a spiritual fact, altered to us by man's defect, speaks for itself. We feel, in spite of all proofs, that we are in relation with a world that is not inert or dead. Science, in presenting nature as inert, crushes our instincts, baffles our deepest convictions. Man we would willingly grant to be in a dead, lifeless state; but not the universe. It is too full of glory and of beauty—a beauty that is to us sacred, that we cannot but call holy. Nature is bound to us by ties so deep and tender, it is so high above us, stirs us with influences so mysterious, speaks to us in words so moving, sympathizes with us so truly, chides us so gently, so fervently inspires or sternly warns, holds out to us for ever so bright a pattern, it cannot be the slave of a mere dead necessity. It seems a ruthless hand that

tears away so bright a veil, and shows us—not nothing, not a dream, but a dead block, worse than nothing; a cold carved image with unheeding eyes, on which we lavish love in vain; which stamps the life out of our hearts, like idol gods, by blind mechanic impulse, and no more.

Therefore it is that so many men of strong affections and imagination oppose themselves to science. They cannot bear to have all this glory and significance reduced to mere results of physical conditions. All that for which they value nature is destroyed in such explanations. They loathe to think that the tenderness and awe which move them so are but subjective enchantments. They say, that science does not account for that which they perceive: like the knife of the anatomist, it pursues the life in vain.

For man does introduce into nature something from himself; either the inertness, the negative quality, the defect; or the beauty, the meaning, and the glory. Either that whereby the world is noble comes from ourselves, or that whereby it is mean: Can it be doubtful which it is?

The course of nature is constant and unvarying, and for this reason, together with our own consciousness of exertion when we would produce physical changes, we assert its inactivity. But invariableness is not proof of inaction. Right action is invariable; right action is absolutely conformed to law. Why, therefore, should not the secret of nature's invariableness be, not passiveness, but rightness? If invariable-

ness implied passiveness, then God himself who changes not must be inert.

That the invariableness of nature bespeaks holiness as its cause doubtless involves an appeal to man's moral sense. But the appeal to an inevitable conscious association of right and wrong with true action, surely has not less weight than an appeal to a perception of intellectual relations. The laws of our nature demand, that if we banish inertness from our thought of nature, we should introduce into it the idea of rightness. There must be some reason for the invariableness of the phenomena. We are bound by our constitution to attribute rightness to nature if it be not inert.

And it is easy to understand how man's condition should be such that he should necessarily have conceived unvarying ACTION as inert necessity. It needs only that he should *not* perceive the action. Where there is true action, not recognized, there passive causes must be supposed. Conceive some being, ignorant of man, ignorant of his spontaneous power of motion: he would necessarily suppose, on observing human movements, that some force operated upon man from without, to produce them. And if they were always the same under the same circumstances, if they were conformed to unvarying principles, to such a being there would be, in human motions, just the uniformity we perceive in nature, just such an appearance of passive law.* In nature is unchanging

* It might be asked, "Can holiness be predicated of nature as of man? Invariability in the watch I make, is different from invariability

oneness of fact in ever-changing form. These changes of form impress us with the feeling of force or exertion, when taking place in certain relations to our consciousness. For our feeling nature as inert involves our consciousness of exertion. We are such that the action which is in it impresses us with the feeling of passive force.

Thus the various *forces* which science supposes are easily understood. They are conceptions necessary for us, and belong to the phenomenon. Science does not affirm them as existing, only as apparent. Taking to herself the position of dealing only with phenomena, she assigns to these forces also but a phenomenal character. The fact of nature is felt by us as a passive existence, subject to these various forces, because we

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in the child I educate. The child has a will and freedom, and his right action I call holiness; but unless the watch also has a will and freedom, I should not call its right action holiness."

It is not the phenomenon that is spoken of, but that true being, itself unperceived, which causes the phenomenon to be perceived by us. The phenomenon is inert, and therefore not possibly holy; but we speak of the essential fact, which is different therefrom and not inert. Of this, holiness is affirmed, because the phenomenon is uniform. The uniformity in that which we feel to be depends on right action, and not on inaction in that which is.

To take an illustration. If when we look through a stereoscope it is said to us that the object is double, we might reply in the same way, "How can that which I see be said to be double? it is single." True; it is not that which is consciously present to our perception that is spoken of, but the object which causes us to have such perception, and to think aright, of which we must remember the subjective laws of vision. We correct our perception, as it were, by withdrawing our eye from the stereoscope. So we must mentally withdraw our eye to judge of the true reality of nature. Not of that which is consciously present to our perception, but of that which truly is, we want to learn.

do not feel it rightly. The passive forces have been necessarily supposed, because there cannot be true action in that which is but a phenomenon.*

So far we may see clearly. That which we feel to be is inert only because it is not the very essence of that which IS; and the invariableness and necessity throughout nature present now to us a new aspect. It no more makes the fact of nature passive. To be able to refer all things in nature to invariable laws would be the glory and the joy of man. This would be to demonstrate in nature undeviating holiness, perfect and unfailing love. Understand that the inertness is due to man, and the reducing all things to an apparently mechanical necessity revolts the soul no more.

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* Because that which is a phenomenon cannot EXIST. It has a relative existence only; it "is to us," *i. e.*, it is felt by us as existing; that which truly exists being different. Of course, therefore, there cannot be action in a phenomenon, there not being existence. It is of necessity characterized by inertness. It has relative or apparent action, but is in itself and absolutely inactive. To say that the phenomenon is different from that which truly is, and to say that it does not exist, are the same thing. The fact exists, and the phenomenon is felt by us to exist, because of the existence of that fact. Thus it is easy to understand how an *inert existence* has been supposed. The idea is self-contradictory, yet it must have arisen. Ignorance necessitates belief in the existence of that which only is to us, *i. e.*, of the phenomenon. But the phenomenon is found to be inert, before it is recognized to be only a phenomenon. It is found to be inert while it is still supposed to BE. Thus the notion of inert existence comes to be entertained, and grows familiar insidiously, so that its impossibility is overlooked; and men who maintain that the things that are to us are but phenomena, and do not truly exist, still regard the fact of nature, which does exist, virtually as inert.

Because nature is spiritual, science has been compelled to introduce the conception of law. Incongruous as it is with our thought of an inert substance, it has been felt to be not less natural and true to instinct than indispensable for theory. And rightly. In nature law is fulfilled: perfect obedience is there; for the fulfilling of law is love.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE ILLUSTRATION FROM ASTRONOMY.

CALLICLES.—I know not how it is, Socrates, you appear to me to speak well. Yet that which happens to most, happens to me ; I am not quite persuaded by you.—PLATO : *Gorgias.*

THE difficulty which is naturally felt in conceiving that the fact which causes our experience is spiritual may be much diminished by the aid of analogy. Not that analogy furnishes any part of the evidence on which the statement rests. That evidence claims to have a demonstrative basis in science, which demands that we should ascribe the perceived inertness to man, and recognize that the inert phenomenon denotes a fact that cannot be inert. But however sufficient these or any other proofs might be granted to be, there still remains a difficulty in respect to the feeling, a strangeness, and as it were an unnaturalness, that has its seat chiefly in the sense, and which might express itself in such terms as these : " What does it avail to prove the world not physical ? of what use is it to bring arguments that these things which I see and handle, which I use for food or clothing, which

are passive before my touch, are spiritual? I know that they are not. This is the world in which I am, and it is unspiritual enough." All must be subject for a time to this feeling: it is chiefly the result of habit, and soon ceases to cause any embarrassment. It might be sufficient to reply that these things are the *phenomena*, the physicalness of which is not denied, but affirmed, and the reality of which to us is the very evidence of the want of life of MAN: their not being felt by us to be, as they are, the appearances of a different reality, showing man's defectiveness. It might be urged that no one leads so natural and common-sense a life, as he who knows that he is living face to face with eternity and all spiritual things, and that a rectification of his own condition would make him feel himself to be so. It needs only a liberation from the chains forged by speculation and hypothesis, to make it most easy to us to recognize in all our consciousness a spiritual cause, and a deadness in ourselves. But assistance in overcoming the natural feeling, which makes this conviction difficult to acquire against our preconceptions, may be derived from the course of man's thought upon other subjects, and especially from the history of astronomy. Remembering only that in the one case the intellectual apprehension alone is concerned and in the other the actual being of man, the progress of astronomical discovery may serve to illustrate, in almost every detail, the course of man's learning that nature is spiritual, and that he wants life.

We feel it absurd to be told that this is the spiritual

world. According to all that we believe it is certainly not so. But we believe that the starry universe is infinite, or at least inconceivably vast in its extent in space ; we reject with scorn the idea that it is confined within a petty sphere around the earth. Yet the wisest of men before Copernicus could not have believed the universe to be as we know it to be. It would have seemed as absurd to them to be told that the universe is infinite, as it is to us to be told that it is spiritual. And why ? Simply because they ascribed to the starry heavens a condition which belonged not to it, but to themselves. On the ground of their own feelings and perceptions, they believed the heavens were moving round the earth, and were forced therefore to conceive of them as they are not. Nothing could render it possible for men to think rightly of the universe in its relation to space, but the accepting for their own a condition which they perceived, and only could perceive, as existing in that universe. Just so it is with us. So long as we conceive a deadness in nature we cannot think of it as it truly is : but if we will accept a deadness as our own, then there is no more difficulty. When men ceased to attribute their own motion to the universe, it expanded to the infinite ; if we cease to attribute our inertness to the universe, it rises to the spiritual. Self-abnegation is the law of knowing. The universe cannot be infinite if it be revolving round the earth ; it cannot be spiritual if it be inert. Is it a dead universe or a dead humanity ? a revolving heaven or revolving earth ?

Again, it may be asked : Are these things that we

perceive by sense spiritual or what are they? and why do we perceive them? To this it is to be replied, that the spiritual fact, acting upon us being such as we are, causes us to perceive in the way we do; but that the impressions we thus receive do not correspond with that which truly exists. Man's own condition has to be considered; it makes that which we feel to be, different from that which is. These objects of sense are the phenomena resulting from the relation of the fact to us; they are not themselves the fact but the mode in which man perceives it. The specks of light which we see in the heavens are the appearances which result from the relation between the heavenly bodies and ourselves, but by no means do they correspond to those bodies. The heavens are not as they are to us. A very different thing acting upon us makes us perceive that appearance and compels us, while in ignorance, to believe the appearance to be the truth.

Our perception, our necessary belief in the world as physical until we have learnt why it appears so; our being affected by physical things as we are, so moved by them and so deceived—that they, although not truly real, but only phenomenal, are real to us and determine our entire experience and life; all this is part of that work in respect to man in which his relation to the spiritual world consists. The astronomical fact is not those little specks which answer to our perceptions, but that mighty universe which we have learnt from them. So the true and absolute fact of nature is not these physical things

which answer to our perceptions, but that higher fact which has to be learnt from them. Because of man's littleness and deficiency, the impression which nature produces upon him is below the truth of it. We have to remember this before we can think of it aright.

The problem presented by astronomy to man, and the mode of its solution, are an image of the larger and higher problem presented by the world, and of the mode in which its solution is effected. Our perception being modified by an unknown condition affecting ourselves, we have to learn what that condition is. There is only one way in which such a problem can be solved :—

The subjective element must be recognized as subjective, and transferred from that which is apart from ourselves, to that which implicates ourselves. In astronomy the history of the process is simple, and its essential features clearly marked. The appearance of motion due to man's own condition was observed and investigated, the relations which exist in respect to it accurately noted, under the conviction that the truth corresponded to the appearance. From this work of observation arose hypotheses, which were necessary to represent the appearances observed. These were the epicycles. The planetary motions were so irregular, owing to the combination of their motion around the sun with their apparent motion round the earth, that an immense number of revolving wheels were supposed, in various relations to each other, by the combined motions of which the apparent

motions could be accurately conceived. For the epicycles were afterwards substituted, first a motion of the planets round the sun, and finally the motion of the earth.

It is submitted that in respect to the inertness we perceive in nature, science as a whole has the same work to perform as astronomy performed in relation to the motion we perceive in the heavens: and that this work is performed in the two cases in precisely the same way. The appearance is observed, investigated, and the relations which exist in respect to it accurately noted, under the supposition that it is the fact. Hence arise hypotheses even more numerous and complicated than those of the old astronomy: they are necessary to represent an inertness affecting ourselves as if it existed in the universe. These hypotheses, expressing the observed relations, constitute the substance of science as it exists at present. They accurately and in the best way, represent that which is the phenomenon, or which man perceives.

But so did the epicycles. Why, then, were the epicycles rejected. Partly for the reason that they became too complicated to be endured. They taxed the mind of man beyond the bounds of possibility; and the simpler conception took their place because it was simpler. So with science: the hypotheses with which it is encumbered have become too complicated. All these hypotheses are rendered necessary by the supposition that nature is inert; and the simpler conception that the inertness is due to man has a claim to take their place because it *is* simpler.

Our present science represents an astronomy that leaves the earth in the centre. As the wrongness of that conception was made manifest by the suppositions which it rendered necessary, so the wrongness of our conception of nature is manifested by the suppositions we are forced to form. We are compelled to admit our natural idea untenable. The fact cannot be as it is to us.

We can maintain our natural conception of nature only so long as we have an unlimited indulgence in hypotheses, and frame a new supposition, of property, or principle, or law, for every fresh phenomenon that is discovered, as the ancients invented a new epicycle for every new irregularity observed in the planetary motion. When these suppositions are inquired into, and tested whether or not they can truly be, the case begins to appear different.*

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* See "A Speculation concerning Matter," by PROFESSOR FARADAY: *Philos. Mag.* The celebrated Dr. Young expresses his dissatisfaction thus:—"It has been of late very customary to consider all the phenomena of nature as derived from the motions of the corpuscles of matter agitated by forces varying according to certain intricate laws which are supposed to be primary qualities, and for which it is a kind of sacrilege to attempt to assign any ulterior cause. . . . When a geometrician has translated this language into his own, and converted the formula into a curve with as many flexures and reflections as the labyrinth of Dædalus, he imagines that he has depicted to the senses the whole procedure of nature. Such methods may often be of temporary advantage as long as we are contented to consider them as classifications of phenomena only; but the grand scheme of the universe must surely, amidst all the stupendous diversity of parts, preserve a more dignified simplicity of plan and of principles than is compatible with these complicated suppositions."—YOUNG'S *Lects.* Kelland's Ed., 1845, p. 476.

In astronomy men admitted so long that the motion was in the heavens, because it was tacitly assumed: attention was not directed to that question. When the inquiry was once distinctly raised, it could be decided only in one way. So have we admitted the inertness we certainly feel, to be in nature, only because it has been tacitly assumed to be so. When once attention is fixed on it, and the inquiry distinctly raised; is there *inaction* in nature, or inadequate apprehension on the part of man? can it be decided except in one way? The difficulty is not to *answer* the question, but to ask it fairly; to free ourselves sufficiently from conclusions which have always been taken for granted.

The argument which has been used respecting the Copernican Astronomy; that the senses do not deceive us in respect to the apparent motion, but give us an impression which is equally consistent with either of two explanations, applies in the same way to the question whether the inertness be in nature or in man. Our perception of inertness proves only that there is defectiveness; there is a deadness *either* in nature or in man. But this is not all: The force of the demonstration of the motion of the earth, against the epicycles, consisted chiefly in this: that it showed why our perception must be such as it is. The old astronomy said: We perceive it so because it is so. The Copernican Astronomy takes a different ground. It says, These are the facts, and therefore our perception must be as it is; the appearance must be this. In this attitude towards our perception, it

has an infallible security for prevalence. For the human mind demands in all cases to know why the appearance must be such as it is. It demands to see its perceptions necessary. This constitutes indeed the necessity of hypotheses; but hypotheses cannot maintain themselves, for they deceive the instinct instead of fulfilling it. They do not show our perceptions to be necessary, but merely assert something on their authority. They are like a vicious argument in a circle; there is an appearance of proof where there is truly none. To say, "We perceive nature inert because it is so, and these are the conceptions we must form respecting it," is not to show our perception necessary, it is to make a hypothesis. But the transference of the inertness to man puts these things in the right relation. We understand our perception to be necessary, and we see why the phenomenon must be such as it is. The fact being the absolute not-inert world, with a deadness affecting man, the perception should be, must be, that of an inert world (that is a physical world) even as it is. In this the mind can rest, its demands are satisfied. The hypotheses have served their purpose.

The direct proof that the inertness perceived as external is man's, corresponds also, in part, with that which supports the Copernican Astronomy; and especially in this, that to admit the inertness man's renders possible a satisfactory belief respecting the universe itself. Knowing that the heavens are not revolving as they seem, we can understand and enter into the relations of its parts; it appears before us a

reasonable, consistent scheme of things; the entire conception so commends itself to our judgment that the evidence amounts to demonstration. Even so, knowing that nature is not dead as it seems, man and his relation to the world are presented to us in a way which we can partly enter into and understand, and which so assures itself to our judgment and our feelings, that we cannot doubt the appearance has received its interpretation. We can think justly of man, worthily of nature. The problem of the universe embarrasses the intellect, pains the heart, cramps and constrains the thoughts no more. It is a thing in itself and for ever certain that the necessity of nature must be love. An inert necessity must have been felt, must have been supposed to exist, by a being in whom there is defect; but the necessity that can *be* is love.

Another respect in which astronomy remarkably illustrates the doctrine that the inertness felt in nature is in man, is furnished by the very difficulty of admitting it. The ground of this difficulty is, or seems to be, that it is against our consciousness. We have a conviction, so apparently intuitive and insuperable, that man is not unspiritual, is not inert. The contrary appears to be his distinguishing characteristic. If we cannot be sure of this, of what can we be sure? All our life, all our thoughts, are moulded to this persuasion. We base it on our consciousness. This is, however, virtually the same difficulty with which the Copernican Astronomy had to contend. We are certainly conscious, or seem to be conscious,

that we are at rest in space, and that the earth is immovable beneath us. The earth was to the ancients distinguished from all the heavenly bodies by being alone steadfast; and that conviction was based upon the strongest evidence that consciousness can afford. Why should not our conviction that man is distinguished from all the rest of the creation that he perceives by being spiritual while that is inert, be a similar error? Why should not his defect make him perceive a universal defectiveness, to which he feels himself the sole exception?

Even yet it is strange to us when we reflect, that we should be borne so rapidly through space and have no consciousness of it; but we admit it freely on the evidence which observation has supplied; and chiefly on the ground that the admission is necessary to enable us to understand the universe.

The same evidence may make us admit that this is not man's life. For it should be remembered that the Copernican Astronomy has made good its ground against our feeling and consciousness, not merely against an inference or belief. The intensest natural convictions, the strongest persuasions of sense, inevitably yield to reason and evidence. That is a law of nature. If the world is not physical, men will as certainly believe it as that the heavens do not revolve.

Nor should there be much reluctance. For what is it but to put ourselves out of the centre, to be content to conceive of ourselves as subordinate and not chief, as being little parts of a greater whole instead of the end for which all exists?

When has it been found that humility, speaking in the name of reason and observation, has deceived us? We think too much of ourselves: this gives the fatal bias to our thoughts; is the judicial blindness of our eyes. God punishes us for pride by ignorance and error.

Let us remember that the aversion to admit the universe not revolving was of old as great as can possibly be ours to admit it not inert. No intensity of feeling, no apparent absurdity or impossibility in the idea, or firm conviction of the contrary, can lend any weight to the argument. Observation and the sound use of reason are the sole arbiters, our convictions and feelings and necessary persuasions are nothing. Rather, if they must be taken into the account, they are on the wrong side; for they are the fruits of ignorance, they are measurements of infinity by finitude.

We require to know why, if man be inert, our consciousness is such as it is; why we feel that our will is free? For no theory has any claim to acceptance which does not account for this feeling. The question of Freewill will be discussed hereafter;* here it may suffice to observe, in general, that it finds a perfect solution if the spirituality of the universe be granted. Man and nature cannot both be inert, but the inertness may be in man if it be not in nature. We think man free and nature not free. The consciousness of our own rest, and perception of motion

* See Book II., Chap. vii.

in the heavens, affords a striking parallel. That man's will is free may be granted, if that form of expression be held to be of value. He has a relative freedom, hence his capacity for virtue and for criminality; but that this constitutes true freedom for man is entirely another proposition. It sounds strange with the words of the New Testament in our memory, to hear the freedom of man affirmed as a Christian doctrine. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty." Man is free just in so far as he has life.

In another respect astronomy aids our thought. The inertness that is affirmed of man is not such inertness as we seem to perceive in nature. *That* physical inertness does not, cannot, exist at all, it can only appear. It is a phenomenon due to man's inertness, but is not the same thing.

Even so the motions that appear in the heavens, real as they are to those who do not know the motion that causes them to appear, do not and cannot exist. They are appearances only. The truly existing motion is of another kind; of such a kind as to necessitate that appearance, but not the same as the appearance. Man's inertness is such as to cause a physical inertness to appear to him in nature; but it is not that physical inertness. The inertness of man is spiritual, actual; a true, absolute death, not a phenomenal one. Physical inertness is phenomenal only. From the true inertness come self-will, arbitrariness, and sin.

Yet by the study of the merely apparent motions in the heavens, which have no existence but are only

the impression produced on us by another motion of a different kind, the truth was discovered. From the study of effects comes the knowledge of causes. Even so, from the study of the merely phenomenal inertness in nature comes a knowledge of the true inertness which affects ourselves.

And the mode in which science effects this result is beautiful. For as astronomy dealt only with the motions of the heavenly bodies, having no possible regard to their essence; that is, chiefly with the subjective element, which is thereby discovered to be due to ourselves; so does science deal chiefly with inertia under the form of cause and effect. Science puts away the consideration of essence or being, and regards only causative connection. It studies emphatically the subjective element, the inertia. Hence its adaptation to reveal to us its source in man. As the stars are at a distance from us, so that we can only observe their motions; so does science as it were put nature at a distance, and set aside all more intimate questions as to what it is, to study one particular condition. It deals with inertia alone; with causes and effects, phenomena and laws.

Yet this last expression is true only in a limited sense. It is true of the present, but not of that which must be. The true work of science is to discover facts. But the other position must be taken first, even as the apparent astronomy must have preceded the Copernican. The old astronomy dealt with appearances and their laws alone, which it presented with the most truthful fidelity. To this

day no better method can be found of representing those apparent motions. But the interpretation of those appearances reveals that which is [in relation to astronomy] the fact. Nor can science end in phenomena and laws; its destiny, its instincts, call it to a worthier work. As well might astronomy have left the earth for ever in the centre of the universe and contented itself with the exhibition of appearances, and the construction of theories which should account for them, as science leave nature inert to our belief, and end its work in manifesting phenomena and laws alone. Science abjures the inquiry after "essences" only in order to avoid false essences; first the fact must be made known before its essence can be inquired into: to seek the essence of a phenomenon were too great a mistake; it only appears to be. This is the abasement which comes before exaltation, the self-control and humbleness which are rewarded with unforeseen success. The astronomers of old little foreknew what work they were preparing for, what higher, truer knowledge than they could conceive would flow from their labours. As little could the noble army of martyrs who have created science have foreseen the result their labours would achieve. For when the fact of nature is seen to be not inert but spiritual, then does science deal with the fact, and no longer with phenomena alone.

In astronomy, again, we see that the false conception of the universe was overthrown by the observation of *relations*. For the relations which observation discovers belong rightly to the truth,

and not to the appearance ; and will not accord with the false conception. The attempt to harmonize them with the false conception necessitated the hypotheses which became at length so manifestly false.

So does science, by the observation of relations in nature, overthrow the false conception we have formed of it. For those relations belong rightly to the spiritual fact. The attempt to harmonize them with our natural impression necessitates our having recourse to hypotheses which we feel must be false ; it produces a tension, a strain upon the mind, which ends of necessity in making us give up that false conception, natural, and at first unavoidable, as it is Science teaches us that nature is not such as it appears to us ; because, if it be, we must believe things which cannot be believed, we must invent hypotheses which will not bear the test of examination and at the complexity of which our natural instincts revolt. The oneness, the necessity, which science discovers in nature, belong to a fact that is not inert but truly active ; they belong to holiness. It is by science, not by speculation, that the life of nature is made known, because it is by observation only that those relations become known by which false conceptions can be rectified.

Lastly: our astronomical knowledge enables us to understand how easily, when once we are familiar with the thought, we may practically and consciously recognize through all our experience a spiritual fact, in spite of our natural feeling. We have no difficulty in always thinking of the heavens as they are and

not as they appear. The apparent relations always suggest to our thoughts and feelings the true relations. We do, without any embarrassment or confusion, recognize what universe we live in; and are literally in a different universe from those who have not astronomical knowledge. Just so easy is it for any man to be consciously aware that the universe is spiritual; just so naturally may the apparent relations suggest to him the true ones; just so literally may he be in a different world from those who do not know that it is only in appearance physical. If we will remember that man wants life, as we remember that the earth is not at rest, we can perfectly well understand and always be conscious that the fact of nature is spiritual. All our instincts and native tendencies combine to enforce this belief; to the child and the utterly ignorant the world is always spiritual, though in a false and perverted sense.

The work of science, in the discovery of invariableness or law, is not to exclude spirituality or action, but to give to it its true meaning of holiness, and teach us that the true spiritual is not that which man has, but that which he wants. Science proves nature different from ourselves; but she places it not below us, as we think, but above. Man has to rise to become one with the FACT of nature. There is not that inert existence which he feels to be.

Nothing is so repugnant, so impossible, as truly to believe the universe to be such as the theory of an external inertness represents it to be. It is manifestly more. Nature cannot be dead. We cannot help

speaking of her life, inconsistent though it be. The difficulties with which science has so constantly to strive; the obstacles which theologians and poets so obstinately put in her way, are but the expressions of this feeling. Why do men so determinately maintain a special vital force, not identical with physical forces, but because they feel that life is truly spiritual, and will not have it made mechanical? Granted that theirs is a blind and unwise struggle; that they deny the very spirituality they seek to maintain, and treat their best friend as an enemy. Not the less speaks humanity in them. Life is spiritual, and nature lives. Rather, far rather, will men admit man to be dead than the universe, when once they see that the question comes to that issue. For the point to be decided is not whether there be a deadness at all. There is a deadness: we perceive it, and are conscious of it ever. We have embodied it in our language, asserted it in our philosophy, made it (as the doctrine of inertia) the corner-stone of our science. The deadness is the great fact of our present state of being, that which gives it its entire character. The assertion of a death is no new doctrine; it is no doctrine peculiar to religion. The only question is; where is it, in nature or in man? absolute or relative; affecting the universal work of God or our miserable selves? Where is the WANT, the necessity for being altered? Is nature wrapped in darkness, or is man blind? This is the simple choice we have to make.

A recognition that we are in the spiritual world demands of us no greater change in our conceptions

than has been already accomplished by astronomy. Nor does our understanding that the phenomenon is not the fact make any difference to the phenomenon itself. Our impressions are not altered; the only question is concerning the interpretation we put upon them. We perceive the universe as inert. Why? because it is inert, or because, by reason of a defect in man's own being, our impression does not correspond to the truth? This is almost too simple to lay stress upon, yet there is apt to be a misapprehension respecting it. The sun rises and sets to us as it did to the first of men. If it did not, we could not affirm the revolution of the earth. If nature were not inert to us, we could not affirm the deadness of man. The appearance is not altered by our better knowledge. The phenomenon is not made less by our knowing the fact, but more. It is shorn of no glory or value that it possessed, but receives an added lustre, a new significance. To know that the fact of nature is spiritual leaves us all that is in nature, but adds to it infinitely more. We do not thereby escape from the state which makes it physical to us, but we are freed from an illusion. The spiritual world must and should affect us as it does. For us to be affected otherwise, either man must be different, or the world must not be spiritual.

Man's defect is not in his perceiving the world as physical, but in his perceiving it as a reality; in his not feeling it to be phenomenal only; even as our ignorance is not the cause of our perceiving the heavens move, but of our thinking such motion to be real.

From this state we cannot escape by any action of our own, nor is it desirable we should escape; but we can recognize the truth. We can think more rightly, though our impressions remain the same. So we are every way advantaged, and especially better prepared for action.

From our false feeling we learn what man's state is. We are such that the spiritual is physical to us, the active inert, the living dead, love a mechanical necessity. Such is man; such his defect; such his necessity for being made new. Here is the secret of his pride. Because he is dead, he sets himself up as the centre of all things, and feels himself exalted as such a king. He admires himself, extols himself, seeks to subordinate all things to himself, must make all things contribute to his pleasure; he must get all he can, must exercise his arbitrary will, will yield nothing, nor forego, nor sacrifice: all of which is the opposite to God.

He does not know that all this is from a miserable want: that as, through our own motion, the heavens revolve about the earth and each man feels himself the centre of the universal sphere, so the secret of self-exaltation, self-will, self-regard and self-assertion is inertness. He says: I am free, and nature is my slave: he does not know that this is death. Should he not rather say: In becoming one with that which nature IS, I live?

CHAPTER IV.

OF KNOWING.

The inseparable propriety of time, which is ever more and more to disclose truth.—*Advancement of Learning.*

THUS astronomy exhibits an instance of a false belief respecting the universe, due to man's own condition; a belief established by universal consent, fortified by powerful arguments, and lasting many ages; yet a belief fertile in practical evils, and necessary to be removed before man could use the world aright. Astronomy shows us also the simple and natural mode, of observation and learning from nature, by which such false beliefs are rectified. It should not therefore be urged against the opinion that the fact of nature is spiritual, that there is universal belief against it, and a natural persuasion of the strongest kind; nor should it prejudice the inquiry that so long a period has elapsed without the error being rectified. All these things we know may be; they have been before; it is natural that they should be. And if more ages have passed before man learns that he wants life, than before he discovered that the earth

was not steadfast in the centre of the sphere, it may be remembered that the work is greater, and demands a larger preparation.

And if there appear to be strong arguments against this opinion, and much difficulty in admitting it, it may not be amiss to recall to mind that the true astronomy, basing itself upon the one certain argument that the perceived motion could not be in the heavens, yet met with many difficulties, and was opposed by strong arguments. Nothing could persuade a man so admirable in all respects and so well qualified to form a right opinion as the Astronomer Tycho Brahe, that the earth was not at rest. The firm persuasion of our steadfastness, except when we move or are moved relatively to the things around us, he could not give up; as hard that was to him, as it seems to us to give up the persuasion of man's life except when he physically dies. Apparently he could not entertain the conception that man might be either at rest or moving to these things, and yet be not at rest, truly and in the strict meaning of the term: even as we find it strange to think that man may be living or dead to this earthly life, and yet not truly living in the strict sense of the word.

More striking still, Bacon himself, who led the van in man's deliverance from the persuasion of his own knowledge, rejected the doctrine of the earth's motion; not lightly, nor from mere prejudice, but on mistaken arguments drawn apparently from nature. He says: "So we may see that the opinion of Copernicus touching the rotation of the earth, which astronomy itself

cannot correct, because it is not repugnant to any of the phenomena, yet natural philosophy may correct." It seemed to him that there were proofs, from other grounds, against it. Even so it might appear to us that, though an inertness in man instead of in nature could not be disproved from science, because it necessarily agrees with the phenomena, that is, with an absolute conformity to law and apparent passiveness in nature, yet it might be set aside by arguments drawn from other sources. Bacon's example, therefore, may teach us caution. The motion of the earth, proved by astronomy, refuses to be disproved on any other ground. May not a deadness in man, based on the simple argument that the perceived inertness cannot be in nature, compel a like assent?

Doubtless there were many things the Copernican Astronomy could not explain. Doubtless it was not, at first, fully reconcilable with all that was justly held: but also, demands were made upon it that had no claim to be regarded, and arguments were used against it founded on opinions which farther examination overthrew. The experience of the past may teach us patience. Can it be that our impressions of the universe should need no correcting? is it not certain they demand to be elevated and enlarged? Is it evidence in favour of our notions, or not rather truly against them, that man, such as he has proved himself to be, has been obliged to entertain them?*

* "By prejudices of opinion," says Sir John Herschel, "we mean opinions hastily taken up, either from the assertion of others, from our

But with regard to all the analogies which may be urged from our false impressions respecting objects of sense to support the conclusion that nature in its true essence is not such as we feel it to be, it must be remembered that they are *but* analogies. They are used only to render the bearing of the argument more evident, and to show how in human life, as elsewhere in nature, one thing pre-figures and prepares for another.

The cases are on a different level. In the one, an accurate conception is substituted for a conception conformed to a merely sensuous appearance ; in the other, a belief in that which is not to be conceived is substituted for a belief in the existence of that which is conformed to our mode of thought. Which indeed

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own superficial views, or from vulgar observation ; and which from being constantly admitted without dispute, have obtained the stronghold of habit upon our minds. Such were the opinions once maintained that the earth is the greatest body in the universe, and placed immovable in its centre, and all the rest of the universe created for its sole use ; that it is the nature of fire and of sounds to ascend, that the moonlight is cold, that dews fall from the air, &c." "To combat and destroy such prejudices we may proceed in two ways, either by demonstrating the falsehood of the facts alleged in their support, or by showing how the appearances which seem to countenance them are more satisfactorily accounted for without their admission. But it is unfortunately the nature of prejudices of opinion to remain after all ground for their reasonable entertainment is destroyed. Against such a disposition the student of science must contend with all his power. Not that we are so unreasonable as to demand of him an instant and peremptory dismission of all his former opinions and judgments : all we require is, that he will hold them without bigotry, retain till he shall see reason to question them, and be ready to resign them when fairly proved untenable, and to doubt them when the weight of probability is shown to lie against them. If he refuse this, he is incapable of science."

is but saying that the very essence of being is above our power of conceiving.

The position affirmed is that the fact of nature does not correspond to our conceptions, even as we know it does not correspond to our sensuous impressions; and that in respect to our conceptions, as to our senses, a truer knowledge is acquired through the examination and testing by observation and reflection of that which we have believed to be. When it is proved that things which are to our sense cannot be that which truly exists, we abandon the belief without hesitation, and infer a different existence. We regard those impressions no more as authoritative, but endeavour by due consideration, to infer from them what the truth must be. So should we act when it is proved that the things which present themselves to our conception cannot be the fact of nature. We should have no hesitation in giving them up also; and in inferring an existence, and a condition of our own, which would cause us rightly to have such conceptions, although not themselves answering to the truth. Our necessary conceptions of nature are such that we may, by due consideration, infer the truth from them. The fact which makes us conceive, as we do, a physical world, we can by taking into account man's own condition certainly infer to have quite different properties. Our conceptions should be placed on the same level as our sensuous impression; as not themselves authoritative, but as supplying the means of trustworthy knowledge. Thus, if the moon be not truly a bright disc, although that is what we

must see; so neither can the universe be truly an inert existence obeying passive laws, although that is what we must conceive. If we cannot think of it otherwise, that is of little moment; we may know it none the less to *be* otherwise, and by the necessity of our thought know also something respecting man.

The necessity of our thought is, like the necessity of our sensuous perceptions, not an authority, not a thing to which our belief must be conformed, but a fact of our experience on which our true knowledge must be based. Both alike bespeak a cause, an existence, but are no evidence of what kind it is.

And with regard to the existence of the things we touch and use, what is true of them is only that they have a relative existence. They are relatively to us: they have the same existence as our bodies. They are to man's feeling, to his consciousness. The existence of phenomenal things is not denied in any such sense as to leave a blank or vacancy, as if it were space left empty. They exist as parts of the whole; but that whole is different from what we conceive. It is asserted that our apprehension of the universe is inadequate.

It should, however, be remembered, with reference to the illusions of the senses which thought corrects, that we have no other kind of evidence for those things which we find most real and certain than we have for those which are proved to be illusions. The evidence we have of the earth on which we stand is not truly different from that which we have of a

bright disc in the heavens; it is more, but it is still the evidence of sense. We see the moon as a disc, we see and touch the earth as rock, or water, or tree, or house; but touch may be deceptive as well as sight. Two united senses give us no security against the deceptiveness of *sense*. We know only that the earth is to us. It supports us, answers to our efforts, to our conceptions. And if there be in us an extreme assurance that that which sight and touch unitedly affirm must be truly that which is, we should remember that there is in us the same natural assurance, until it is corrected, of the certainty of sight alone. If men have been willing to determine, upon grounds of sound reason, what is truly indicated by that which they only see, surely it may be expected that they will be willing to use the like consideration with respect to that which they both see and touch. Truth does not come from clinging to our natural convictions.

And our finding these sensuous things always the same, or changing according to definite laws, so that we can calculate upon them, use them, and feel them reliable, firm, and true: this does not affect the essential nature of that which is. The fact, being ever the same, is ever the same to us; that which is to sense will be to sense again; that which is to thought will be the same to thought again. There *is* that which causes us to see a bright disc in the heavens, and so long as it is the same and we are the same, so long shall we see that disc; but that which we believe in, through such seeing, is very unlike the

disc. For our perception of such a disc there must be more than we perceive.

Never, indeed, can we account for our perception by the existence of things which correspond to it. If the fact were not more, never could we perceive so much. Nay, we should certainly not perceive at all. How should inert things make us perceive? The fact of our perceiving as we do proves the existence of more than is perceived. Can our apprehension be equal to nature's excellence? Do we not, in respect to each single thing, have to believe more in that thing than we immediately perceive? How then should it not be the same in respect to the sum of all?

For our experience to be such as it is, there must be, to our feeling, inert or physical things. We must perceive them and act upon them; they must be the realities of our existence. How should this be? Inertness is opposed to being: there cannot truly *be* inert existence. We must, therefore, perceive as inert that which is not inert; only so can the things we have to do with be passive, dead, material, such that we can exercise force upon them, and find resistance. Only in one way can we have perception and experience of inert realities: there must *be*, apart from man true not-inert existence, and in him inertness: then to him there will be inert existence: the existence without, the inertness within. Is not this the solution of our perception? Inert things thus will be to us; a physical world, answering in every way to our feeling and our action. And not only so; but thus alone can

it be that the things which are the realities to us should cease and pass away. For our activity, progress, enjoyment, for this life of man, the things that are to us must change ; they must have been, but be no more. They must not BE, but be temporal and fleeting : the forms under which an unchanging existence is perceived. With true eternal being around him, and defect in man, inert and passing things are his realities. He dwells amid phenomena, and lives a temporal and earthly life.

Do we ask : How should man be in an inert world ? Let us ask : How should he be in a revolving universe ? These two questions admit of one reply. He is not so. The universe cannot be revolving. Let the universe, therefore, stand fast, and man revolve. So shall be to him day and night, rising and setting suns, noonday brightness for his work, and solemn revelations of stars to lead him up to God.—The universe cannot be dead. Let the universe be living, therefore, and man be dead. So to him there shall be a world of passive laws and lifeless uniformity, a world subject to his control, invitant to his energy, full of deep lessons to his heart.

CHAPTER V.

OF BEING.

God is Love.

We have necessarily inferred, from our experience, the existence of an inert world; conceiving that the fact corresponds to our impressions. But what we are compelled to infer depends, in every case, upon our knowledge: only when that is complete and exact, can an inference, however necessary, or belief, however unavoidable, possess correctness. Nor is there any conscious difference to the mind, in respect to its necessity, between a true and a false belief. They can be distinguished only by being tested. A true inference proves itself true on examination: a false inference is found by the same means to be false, and proves thereby ignorance on the part of him to whom it has been necessary.

These are very obvious considerations to apply to our opinions respecting the world; nor would there have been any difficulty in applying them, but for one circumstance, which has seemed to distinguish those

opinions from our opinions on all other subjects. It has been thought that the belief respecting the world, which we derive from our consciousness, must be held infallible, because, if it is not so, the sole basis for certainty is taken away. It has been supposed that if such belief is untrue, we not only are under illusion, but are hopelessly and inevitably so: under an illusion from which man can never escape. It is not denied, on the one hand, by any man who has considered the question, that our consciousness might be caused in a manner different from that which we have necessarily supposed; yet it is maintained, on the other, that it cannot be so, or else man would lie under an irremediable delusion. The argument is, that we cannot believe that his Creator would have given him capacities, instincts, and desires only to mock and to deceive him. And the argument is in itself a good one. We are persuaded that He has given to man the means of knowing the truth, and cannot have left him hopelessly under illusion. If man truly had no means of correcting his first necessary impressions respecting the nature of the world, there would be a fair basis for maintaining that those impressions correspond to the truth.

But this position may be seen to rest on an imperfect knowledge. It is not to be opposed, for it merges itself into, and becomes, a different one, when the work of science is rightly apprehended. It is not a true asumption that man has no means of correcting his impressions respecting the world. If they are false, he is not left hopelessly under illusion. The

means whereby that illusion is escaped from, as in the case of all other illusions, are at his command; in investigation, observation, and inquiry; in the right use of his natural powers. In reasoning upon this subject men have overlooked, as they naturally must have done, the true bearing of science: they have conceived it wrongly; placing it in subordination to their natural impressions, instead of recognizing in it a power to correct them. For as an investigation of nature, not in its parts only but as a whole, science gives man the knowledge by which he may escape from the false conception of existence which his ignorance has imposed upon him.

For it is the conception of EXISTENCE as physical, or inert, which involves in mystery the problem of Being. Of physical existence the problem never can be solved; all attempts must land us in deeper darkness, must make the contradictoriness more manifest. We are trying to think of that as "being" which cannot be, but can only "appear." All our attempts to think are brought to nought by this error; no hypotheses will fill the chasm, no imaginings hide from ourselves the consciousness that the very fact and essence of all things escapes us. Conceiving an inertness in the universe, a negation not relative but absolute, we are amazed that we cannot conceive what that BEING can be, to which inertness belongs. But why should we be amazed? How can inertness belong to BEING? Inertness is deadness. Here, in ourselves, is the Being to which inertness belongs; we know it but too well: the Being in whom is death.

Since then there is in science a means by which man's natural convictions in respect to the world may be rectified, there remains no more reason for refusing to admit them to be erroneous. And there is a great relief to the mind in being able to take this ground. Man's life is brought into greater harmony and consistency with itself. For it is the law of our present state that we should learn truth through illusion. Nor can we, indeed, conceive it to be otherwise, without an entire alteration of our mental constitution. Starting from ignorance, error must have precedence of truth. In fact, man is under illusions which include all his being. For does he not find pleasure in that which may be harmful?—are not poisons sometimes pleasant? —are not most enticing enjoyments often disastrous? But to have pleasure in a thing is to feel it good. Man, therefore, may feel that to be good which is not good, that to be evil which is not evil. His feeling of good is no proof of goodness. He is under illusion as to good.

And does not man often necessarily think that to be true which is not true? Does not his ignorance determine his opinions? That which he must think true may, or may not, be true. He is under illusion as to truth.

And again. Does not man of necessity think that to be, which appears to him, although it may not be? He may feel that to be which is not: he is under illusions as to being.

There are two possible views which may be taken of the universe, conformably with the appearance:

two interpretations which may be put upon that which we perceive and are conscious of. We may think, as we have been accustomed to think, that nature is a dead inert entity, subject to mere passive law, with one being of spiritual capacities and endowments, and he mysteriously failing, sinning, evil, falling short of all that he should be. The one being, worthy to be called a Being, marred, and lost, and evil. No true life except in man, and in him so strangely spoilt.

Or we may think nature perfect in spiritual life; an universe full of being that is true Being, with no flaw, with no defect; but in respect to man this Being wanting; he being the one defective thing. Not that the universe is imperfect by his defect, marred by his failure. That is part of its life. He is what he is, because life is to be given to him; his consciousness, his work, his action, have reference to a life that is to be bestowed; his deadness is made conscious, as it were, to himself, that he may be delivered from it. Therefore he feels it to be in all that he perceives—therefore the spiritual world is a dead world to him, the universe is so mean, and he so lofty.

According to our conceptions, there is a rightness in nature, but that rightness has no worth; man has worth, but he is wrong. Surely we are right in feeling this to be a dark and painful mystery. But where have we learnt that it is true? That is the *phenomenon*, that is what is felt by us; but we know that our feelings are of no weight unless we know and consider also our own condition, and our relation to that which is their cause. Why should we act against

experience and reason, and assume that, in respect to nature, our impressions are correct while we are ignorant, that we can know without the means of knowing? The evidence on which we take for granted that the universe is such as we think it, would not avail to establish the very slightest fact in our daily life: viz., that it seems so to us, without our having learnt, or inquired, whether there were any circumstances affecting the mode in which it seems to us.

That man should be under illusion shows only that there is defect in him. It is but the necessary consequence of a fact well known. In recognizing that we have been under illusion, we do but assent to an admitted principle, which we might well marvel we had not recognized before. How should we, who without investigation cannot know one single detail of the course of nature, know without investigation the essence of the whole? How should we, who are constantly deceived and under illusions in respect to matters of the most ordinary import, know that we could not have been deceived in respect to the highest and profoundest of all?

Man may take for himself in God's universe a lofty or an humble place: as the one living being or as the one wanting life. He may, in his thoughts, exalt God or exalt himself. In either case his perception must be as it is; in either case he must seem to himself the one living being in a world of death.

It is a simple question, it might seem an idle and

merely speculative one; Is the perceived inertness nature's or man's? But what practical issues it has, what a determining power. On the answer to that question depends the entire attitude of human life. Men wait to be delivered from illusion: they wait to know what the FACT is with which they have to do.

CHAPTER VI.

OF MAN.

Laudable faith consists in resolving to receive and acknowledge whatever there is good ground for believing, however contrary it may be to our expectations, wishes, prejudices. . . . in listening to reason notwithstanding all the strange circumstances that tend to bias the mind the other way.—ARCHBISHOP WHATELY.

IT might be thought that the idea of a deadness in man, affecting his condition in all respects, and causing his impressions and natural convictions to differ from the truth, would present difficulties to the understanding, and run counter to the feelings. But the case is not so. It can be no hard task to recognize in a new bearing the familiar truth that our condition and relation to things determine the mode in which we are affected by them. We do but apply to the whole that mode of judging which we have already applied to all particulars. The proposition, therefore, that the universe is not truly physical in its own being, but is rendered so to us by man's condition, involves no new mode of thought or principle of judging. It is not a speculation, but a question of ordinary evidence, appealing to the rules of judgment which

are daily applied by all men, and used, more reflectingly and on a larger scale, by men engaged in scientific work.

For, when inquiry is made respecting the world, the primary answer is the same, whether it be held that the appearance does or does not correspond to the reality: the world exists. Then there arises a second question: Has that which exists those qualities which we naturally suppose, or are its true qualities other than its apparent ones? Is it, or is it not, necessary that we should take into consideration ourselves and our relations, to enable us rightly to appreciate what it is? Which question, indeed, is simply whether we should employ the means found necessary for arriving at true opinions in every other case, or should adopt another method, against which, in every other case, experience testifies. Shall we act according to experience and reason, or on some supposition to which these general guides of our conduct lend no sanction?

In truth, our case is thus with respect to nature: either we cannot know it truly as it is at all, and must be hopelessly under illusion, or we must learn to know it by discovering our own condition in relation to it, and interpreting the appearance it presents in conformity therewith. The well-ascertained laws of mental operation do not permit any other conclusion.

It is necessary thus to insist at length upon this point, because, simple as it is, the whole question of the spirituality of nature is contained in it. If this principle can once be clearly seen; if it be felt that

a true knowledge of what nature is must depend upon a recognition of our own relation to it, as in every other case right knowledge depends upon such recognition of our own relation; if the question can be brought out of the domain of darkness and assumption, and be treated on the principles called, in all other cases, those of common sense, the entire difficulty is overcome. For the necessity of regarding the apparent inaction in nature, or that which is wanting in it, as the result of man's condition, hardly needs to be insisted on when once it is recognized that a regard must be had to the condition of man, and that some part of the apparent quality, or mode of existence, of nature is due to it.

In truth it is hard to see what other proof could be so convincing as a simple statement of the alternatives. For the inertness that we must recognize in that which is conceived as physical (think of it how we will, or in whatever light we may endeavour to place it), must retain the character of being an absence or negation. Call it by what name we may, we cannot escape from this: in nature as it is perceived by us there is something that we must admit to be of a negative character. Men have named it inertness, or absence of action; but if we object to this, and prefer to regard it in any other way, its essential character will not alter, it remains still an absence. Therefore we must either admit a negation as absolutely existing; must conceive an universal inertness or absence as in some way created; or else that nature is not such as we feel it to be. But is not the

appearance of an universal absence, or defect, simply the way in which we learn that we do not perceive that which is truly existing? When we examine the facts of the external world, we are compelled to think of them as involving an absence of something: what can this mean, but that we do not perceive that which truly is? An absence or defect may well be in that which we perceive, if our perception do not correspond to the fact; but how can it be in the absolute fact itself? Can we conceive a more exact contradiction than that an universal negation exists? or that an absence has been created? The idea of a true instead of an apparent inertness in nature, or that the universe truly is physical, proves itself impossible the moment it is looked into: whatever the truth may be, that cannot be true. And then the other question follows: If nature be not truly physical why is it physical to us? What condition of ours is it that makes the not-inert to be felt as inert? Evidently it is some condition which makes the existence around us to be less to us than it truly is. It is a non-perception on our part. That which truly is in nature is not to us. We introduce the negation, the absence; the negative element, be it what it may, is ours; we must search for it within. This at least may be held certain. And how simple it is! We knew that the truth of nature must be different from our conception of it, because that conception cannot be adequate; now we know one respect in which they must differ. Our conception is of an inactive nature though nature cannot be inactive. Our

conception is therefore inadequate in this respect. The admitted general principle receives a partial application.

And in this all is involved; it should not be necessary to add anything more. Let the conclusion be held fast for a moment and considered. Defect in man causes the universe to be to him defective. How simple is the statement—nay, how self-evident, common-place, and trite. Nothing can be less new, less doubted. In his heart no man thinks otherwise. Yet how strong an illusion holds us. Against this, which we know, and are so well assured of, we cannot help maintaining that the universe is such as it appears; our nature seems divided against itself. That which in theory we give up most readily, in practice we cling to as if for our very life. We say willingly, that which exists is not such as it appears; but we dare not say, that which appears is not that which exists. Why is it that we are so mocked, so bound? Is it a mere contradiction in our nature? By no means. There is no contradiction, nothing but that which ought to be. If the case were not as it is, there could not be that defect on man's part which is the secret of the whole. For what is the source of the embarrassment but this: that the things which appear are real to us: that which is not truly the fact is the fact to us, is felt to determine and control our being? Our existence, as we are, is in that which is not. Here is the contradiction. Our reason and our feeling are at strife. We know, when we reflect, that the things that appear cannot be the things that are; yet we feel them

to be—they are to us. That constitutes our world physical; makes the phenomenon our reality.

Thus has arisen the perplexity that embarrasses us, and makes us say: "It is impossible to understand these things, and therefore we must fall back upon the infallibility of our own impressions." We feel that these things which are the objects of sense certainly are, do truly and really exist, although their existence can be disproved: but so we should feel; so it is the defect of man's being reveals itself.

In this there is nothing peculiar or unlike the rest of our experience. By means of the fact that conditions affecting ourselves modify our perception, those conditions are made known to us. No arrangement in nature is more beneficent, or better adapted to its end, than this. Our own condition (which it is in some sense the most important of all things for us to know, not only because of its immediate interest, but also because such knowledge is the basis of all right apprehension of other things) is revealed to us by means of its effect upon our perception. If that which properly belongs to us had not this effect on the appearance of that which is without us, if our own state were not thus made apparent to ourselves, and brought within the sphere of observation and inquiry, we could never know it, we should have no means of learning it. By study of that which is without us, we must learn what we ourselves are. The spiritual universe, becoming not-spiritual to human apprehension, reveals the defectiveness of man. The spiritual

is felt by him as physical, he feels the appearance as the fact, that he may know his own deadness, what and whence it is.

In judging of the being of the world we must take into consideration the state of man. This is no abstruse idea; it is at the farthest remove from being speculative. When we place our hands, first in very cold water, and then in water less cold, the latter feels warm. We should naturally say: I feel it warm, it *is* warm: but would it be an abstruse or speculative thing to reflect that we must think of the previous condition of our hands; and that the water was not warm, although we felt it so? Whatever it may be to take into account what man is when we would judge what nature is, it is at least not to be unpractical; it is not to deviate from the rules and maxims of ordinary life; it is not to obscure a plain question by subtleties.

Still less is it to lose or be deprived of anything. A feeling is apt to take possession of us, and one from which we cannot immediately escape, to the effect, that if the appearance of the universe be not such as the fact is, then there is less than there would otherwise be; as if some "existence" would be set aside. A little reflection frees us from this embarrassment, which indeed is not peculiar to this case, but arises continually with the advance of knowledge. The change of an incorrect opinion for a true one always involves the loss of something that was connected with the former. An idolater in learning better to understand the divine nature loses his gods of flesh

and blood, his solid, substantial divinities; and finds it, at first, difficult to understand that he has truly incurred no loss. Ignorance necessitates suppositions which knowledge sets aside, but meanwhile those suppositions have gained a hold upon the thoughts as if they were realities, and the parting with them is felt as a deprivation. The slave accustomed to his bonds misses his shackles in his first days of freedom. What loss is it to give up the less for the greater, to loosen the grasp upon the transient to lay hold upon the eternal, to change that which appears to us for that which is? How can our thinking differently of nature alter anything in it: how make it less? What can we lose by knowing better? And especially, how can it be a loss to feel that nature is more than we have thought, to understand that that which appears as a want in it is from our non-perception? of what can this deprive us?

What we miss, and feel to be taken away from us, as if it were a possession, is the necessity of making suppositions, of inferring certain things. We need not any more suppose what we have hitherto been compelled to suppose. The opinion which necessitated those suppositions being changed, they are no longer necessary. We have altered our view, and perceive that the facts demand a different interpretation. That is all. Nature is more than we thought. And man is more also; simply our view is enlarged: the majesty of God, and of His universe, are more worthily revealed to us.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE RELATION OF SCIENCE TO PHILOSOPHY.

BUT it may be asked, is it not better to remain in such an assurance as the acceptance of our easiest ideas may give us, and to adjust our conceptions of spiritual things, and our belief respecting a higher existence, to that view of the world; pursuing rather questions of a practical bearing, in respect to which we can attain definite results?

A fatal objection lies against this compromise; that it cannot be carried out. Men refuse to be bound by it. Nor can any means be found of giving it a practical effect. He who argues against the unflinching pursuit of truth cuts away the basis of all argument, and man's best instincts take part against him. Whatever the truth may be, it must be better to know it than to be in error; it must be a sacred and pre-eminent duty to accept it. Even if we can have no knowledge, it is better to know our necessary ignorance.

The denial that man can have knowledge rightly so called is sometimes termed Positivism. It accepts the

result of the argument which lands us in universal denial, and seeks to adapt man's actions to that opinion of his condition. It says: "All human knowledge is relative; it is knowledge only of that which appears, not of that which is. All things that we can perceive or think are phenomena, not truly facts or existences. The relations of that which appears we can know, but deeper we cannot penetrate. Nor need we wish to do so, for these relations of phenomena are all that concerns us, all that in any way affects our well-being or our duty. Man's life, in short, is a life that has to do only with appearances and their relations; it is not his part to inquire concerning existence."

Positivism thus denies that the truth of things answers to our impressions; in this respect well representing the tendency of science (whose name it especially assumes) to exclude ourselves, and any mental necessities whatever of our own, as a standard of that which is. It lays down the principle, that that which is to man is not that which is, and repudiates any inferences founded on the true existence of that which he perceives. Of necessity positivism denies matter; for it denies that the world that exists corresponds to that which appears. In other words, this world, which is material, exists only relatively to us; that which truly exists may be different. The phenomenon is one thing, the fact (or absolute) is another, but with the latter we have no concern. And this ground is taken by the positivist, for the express reason that it is practically the best. He lays it down, that through pretending to any other know-

ledge than that of appearances, man's powers are perverted, and his efforts misapplied. Pointing to the past history of philosophy, he says, only mischief has come from the belief in the reality of that which we feel to be, of that which alone we can know. Men have wasted their labour in pursuits that are necessarily fruitless, and have turned aside from the works which alone can truly benefit them. The remedy for the evils of the world is to know, and be content in knowing, that we have to do with phenomena alone, which are real only to man.

But does it truly appear that this is the final result of the inquiry on the grounds affirmed. Positivism seeks to set aside philosophy, or the inquiry into that which is, and to substitute for it science, or the observation of that which appears. By the study of phenomena and their laws to predict the future, for the regulation of human action, is the sole object which it permits to man. But the conclusion which is thus set forth has not been established. It is true that science consists in the study of phenomena and laws alone, and has no reference to the fact of existence; but it is not proved that its relation to philosophy is that of successor and destroyer. There is another part which it may take, and for which it may be better adapted; that of servant and renovator.

In bringing science and philosophy into relation, and marking the links which unite them and determine their mutual destiny, positivism does an essential service; but it is not always given to a man rightly to interpret a relation which he is the first to perceive.

Science labours so strenuously in her work of observing phenomena and tracing laws, and achieves such triumphs in that field, that it may well be long before it is perceived that she has any other or higher task. Science has been conceived simply as the instrument by which our understanding of phenomenal relations is to be enlarged, and our practical command over phenomena extended, by ever-increasing knowledge of their laws. But as we have seen, there is another possible result of science, in addition to greater knowledge of phenomenal relations: it may also teach us something of ourselves; and may show us that some condition perceived as apart from man should have its cause looked for within him. By the nature of science, as the study of that which is perceived, it has an essential adaptation to this result. And if this be so, if through scientific study of phenomena we are made to understand that a quality, or mode of existence, in that which is perceived, does not belong to that which *is*, then it is evident, also, that philosophy stands in quite a new relation to the problem with which it seeks to deal. The experience which demonstrates its incompetency in the past has no force in respect to the future, for the conditions of the problem are altered. It was before: from that which appears to discover that which is, our own condition, on which the mode of our perception depends, being unknown. Now it is: our own condition being known, from that which appears to discover that which is. And the latter problem is as evidently within reach of the human faculties, as

the former is beyond them. For philosophy has found her problem insoluble hitherto, not because man has not the requisite faculties, but because the conditions, or data, essential to a determination of it, were not at her command. Science supplies the indispensable element, for lack of which philosophy has trod a weary round in vain. It transfers the negative element to man; giving demonstration of an inaction in that which man is conscious of which cannot belong to that which truly exists.

In truth, the relation of science to philosophy exhibits, in an eminent light, the life and mutual dependence which mark the progress of human thought. Man's strivings after knowledge, in all his tortuous windings and blind errors, are not mere idle waste, but form a mutually connected and balanced whole, no part of which is unnecessary, and which tends with perfect aim to the development of his nature.

For man's true work is that to which his instincts prompt him; to learn that which is: passing beyond and through the seeming to the fact. But in this effort he fails and is baffled. Over and over again he fails, for he takes the true being to be what seems to him. He seeks the absolute; but this absolute he conceives to be, first, that which he can see, or otherwise perceive by sense, and then that which he can think. He seeks an absolute that is phenomenal. Philosophy is embarrassed by the effort to conceive true being that has negative elements in it; real existence that is physical or inert, an absolute that

can be conceived. It embarrasses itself with needless contradictions. How, then, can it be liberated? Only in one way; only by science. For when the impotence of philosophy stands confessed, the direction of men's energies is altered. They no more seek, so earnestly or so exclusively, to know that which *is*; they give themselves to the investigation of that which appears, to the study of that which is to them, to the tracing of relations, to the establishment of laws. They say: We can never know the very fact of things, we were mistaken ever to try. Meanwhile, with these very words upon their lips, they remove, under a guidance unrecognized, the error which made that attempt a failure. They make manifest that the phenomenon does not correspond to the fact; they give demonstration in what respects it necessarily differs, revealing so what the element in our own condition must be which is affecting our perception, and to which we must have regard in all our thoughts respecting that which is.

Positivism, therefore, is partly true, partly mistaken; true in its basis, mistaken in its practical conclusion; for it fails to recognize an essential element in the case, overlooking the power that is in science to make us know more of man. It is inconsistent also, inasmuch as it takes no account of the significance of its own fundamental position. For while it asserts that all with which we seem to have to do, is phenomenon only; while it lays stress on the fact that this, which truly is not, affects us as

if it were the only reality, it omits to note the remarkable fact which it thereby proves respecting ourselves. It turns to no account the fact that we feel wrongly, which yet it puts forth as its especial discovery. This great and striking certainty, amid all the uncertainty which it points out, it overlooks. We thank it for its revelation of a strange, and strangely neglected, truth respecting ourselves, which we will pursue to its true bearings, and turn to its right account. For to affirm that man's existence is only relative is to deny that he has absolute existence: and what is this but to say that he has not true, actual life; to affirm him wanting, dead?

Postivism does not deny that there is true existence; that were impossible to one who allows that anything appears, or that there are phenomena. It asserts further that this true existence is not identical with the world of phenomena of which, by sense and intellect, we know the relations and the laws. Most unjustly, therefore, were positivism charged with atheism; and it is in the farthest degree removed from materialism. But it evidently errs in stating that our concern is with phenomena alone. That which EXISTS must be that which truly acts; must be the only CAUSE. That which only appears can have no action. Think or feel as we may, our true concern must be with that which *exists*. If we feel otherwise, then we are deceived, but the case is not altered; for a mere appearance, as it has no true existence, can have no true action. There is an evident misapprehension in the statement that we have to do only with phe-

nomena; for if that with which we concern ourselves do truly act on us, then it is not only a phenomenon; if it do not, but only seem to do so, then it is not that with which we truly have to do. Accordingly there is an inconsistency in the language of positivism, marking this inconsistency of thought; for these phenomena, of which it is affirmed that they are not that which truly exists, are, at the same time, spoken of as facts, or as realities. The truth is, simply, that which positivism expresses but practically ignores; that we are under illusion, and feel that which is not, as if it were. Hence all the mystery, all the confusion. It seems to us that we have to do only with things which may be shown to be mere appearances, and not true realities; but the fact is not, and cannot be so. Under the appearance of these phenomena, our real concern lies with the true existing fact We are wrong in thinking the phenomena to be that fact.*

If we may apply to positivism its own language, we might say: the *phenomenon* is, that we have to do

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* There is a curious parallel between the practical teaching of positivism, and the theory of idealism. The idealist, examining that which we perceive, and finding it not to be a thing which can exist apart from a mind, affirms that that which exists, exists in a mind; that it is an idea. The positivist, finding that the things which we feel to affect us are phenomena, not true realities, affirms that our concern is with phenomena, and not with the true reality. But both are inconsistent; both deny their own affirmation in making it; both are misled by the fact of our perceiving and feeling not according to the truth. The idealist should say: These things, that can ~~only~~ only exist in a mind, are not that which truly is; they only seem to be. The positivist should say: Our concern seems to be with phenomena alone, but this is an illusion: the truly important thing is other than these.

only with phenomena. That is what appears; such it is to our feeling and apprehension; but it cannot be the fact. And again: when the positivist argues that man *can* know only phenomena, and cannot know the true fact, it is obvious, in reply, that if his argument be correct, it is impossible for him to know what he affirms. For he can, at most, know that man *appears* unable to know the fact; this is the phenomenon—so it is to his apprehension. He cannot know that the fact is so, else does he know more than phenomena with their relations and laws. For man's relation to the fact of being is not one of the "relations of phenomena," to which the positivist affirms our knowledge to be confined. The data necessary to prove that man can only know phenomena can never be forthcoming, for their existence would overthrow the proposition.

Positivism evidently makes too little of man. Recognizing that defect of his being which cuts him off from true reality, it bids him sink to the level of that state; from which all his strife and error, and vain disappointing labour rather should confirm his hope to be set free. But there is much instruction in the system. Positivism proves at least that the denial of matter, the denial of the reality of the things that are felt as real by us, is not unpractical, does not lead to neglect, or the witholding from those things of all due regard. For the very doctrine which most emphatically takes this ground in theory, in practice devotes the most intense regard to the affairs of life. If this be the result of the merely sceptical denial of the reality of that with which the senses deal, how much

deeper, more worthy, must be his heed to his daily life, who recognizes in ordinary things, not mere material existences, not bare phenomena with no deeper meaning, but the absolute fact of being, filled with all the worth of the eternal, than which there can be no other and no higher, and which are obscured and darkened to our apprehension only by the want of a respondent life in us.

For while the positive theory, in rejecting any essential existence in phenomena, gives great liberty to thought, and overthrows some inveterate and baneful errors, its benefits are purchased at too great a cost. Its gifts are treacherous ; uttering words of honour it inflicts on science a deadly wound. For science lives by the pursuit of truth and of reality. So she grew to her vigorous maturity ; so must she continue to grow, or she must languish and decay. No languid impulse to ascertain relations can feed with throbbing life her mighty limbs. The warm current of her blood congeals at that icy touch. The balancing of profit with no hope to know more of God, is a sickness at her heart. Enthusiasm and belief, an assurance that there is a reality, a being, a life verily responsive to our appeals, in that with which we have to do, these are the secret of her strength ; "her liver, heart and lungs, whereby she lives." Like Samson shorn of his locks, and delivered helpless to his foes, were science robbed of these. Mixed with errors, and false thoughts, and beliefs unfounded, and mistaking of phenomena for facts, have been these living powers ; but they are living : like all life, struggling towards objects unfore-

seen in failure and illusion, the longed-for rest ever forbidden to her weary feet, each solid-seeming goal found to be but an unsatisfying semblance when it is attained, and constituting but a new starting point in the pursuit.

Because the true ends are not man's but God's. Because in all that seeming failure and delusion, God's ends are fulfilled. The true life dwells with Him triumphant, rounding our restlessness with everlasting calm, swallowing up our sorrows in the eternal joy. There is no failure. The failure is phenomenon, not fact; that which we feel because we feel wrongly, and know not that which IS. While we go mourning, the heavens clap their hands, and earth rejoices. Nature palpitates through every nerve with infinite delight. To know is to be glad. The attainment of our ends, our success, our content, were life no more, but death; death undestroyed, the victory of that which is not Love, whose victory were absolute defeat.

BOOK II.

OF RELIGION.

Then I saw that God hath a larger mouth to speak with than I had a heart to conceive with.

CHAPTER I.

OF DEATH.

Nor is it at all incredible that a book which has been so long in the possession of mankind should contain many truths as yet undiscovered. For all the same phenomena, and the same faculty of observation, from which such great discoveries in natural knowledge have been made in the present and the last age, were equally in possession of mankind several thousand years before.—BUTLER: *Analogy of Religion.*

THIS then is the point at which we have arrived: that the study of that which we perceive without us teaches us something respecting our own condition. A twofold change is called for in our thoughts: on the one hand, in our thought of the world in which we are; and on the other in our opinion respecting ourselves. The two changes must go together: the recognition that Nature is more, and the feeling that Man is less. We can accept the fact that our life is a life lived amid things that are but appearances only by accepting also the conviction that this is not, in the true sense, our life. So that the question whether inert things must not be merely the phenomena of an existence not itself inert, comes into relation with the deepest moral problems, and rises from the region of

speculation to that of religion. In what way then does it affect our religious thought?

Man is in no other sense prejudiced than as he clings to that which he cannot feel himself justified in resigning. He is not unwilling to advance, but he is fearful. His very timidity, his consciousness of his liability to err, drive him to assume positions which only the most perfect self-confidence could justify; for there is no rashness like that of fear. We are so bound to that to which we have been accustomed, because to us the unknown is full of vague terrors. The instinct which makes the stoutest heart shrink from darkness, and peoples it with phantoms, is equally strong in the intellectual world. On the accustomed principles certain results can be secured, and we wish to rest. We are almost content not to grow wiser if we can but feel sure. But God will not let us rest. He has other work for us to do. Above all, He will cure us of our mistrust. For the secret of this misgiving is that man has not faith in God. The evil of his nature shows itself in fear. He that is conscious of wrong must be afraid. Adam, when his conscience had awakened, hid himself at the voice of God; so do his children hide themselves at the voice of truth. It was a just fear in Eden, it is a just fear now; but it issues now, as then, in a foolish deed. At the feet of God the shrinking conscience must regain her peace; the timid intellect renew her daring, bowing herself to truth. We do right to fear; we do right to come to that of which we are afraid, that the cause of fear may be taken away.

Men adapt their moral and religious convictions and their intellectual conceptions to each other, and build them up into a more or less connected system. When, therefore, our intellectual opinions are in any considerable degree affected by the results of inquiry, it necessarily happens that our moral beliefs appear also to be implicated, and much embarrassment is caused in this way. It is hard to remember the essential independence of two things which have been thus closely united; and all the power of the moral nature is often enlisted on behalf of merely intellectual opinions, which are in themselves most antagonistic to religious principles, but to which those principles have been, more or less laboriously, adapted. Often, also, the more opposed to the spirit of religion a particular opinion is, the more intimately it appears to be involved with our religious convictions; for the very reason that a larger amount of toil and thought has been bestowed upon the task of bringing them into even an appearance of agreement.

The writers of the New Testament declare men to be dead. They speak of men as not having life, and tell of a life to be given them. If, therefore, our thoughts were truly conformed to the New Testament, how could it seem a strange thing to us that this state of man should be found a state of death? how should its very words, reaffirmed by science, excite our surprise? Would it not have appeared to us a natural result of the study of nature to prove a death in man? Might we not, if we had truly accepted the words of Scripture, have anticipated that

it should be so? for if man be rightly called dead, should not that condition have affected his experience, and ought not a discovery of that fact to be the issue of his labours to ascertain his true relations to the universe? Why, have we been using, in our religious speech, words which affirm man dead, and feel startled at finding them proved true in another sphere of inquiry?

Do we say that man is "spiritually" dead? That is the very thing affirmed by science. Spiritual death is actual death; death in respect to true being: the death which constitutes the world a dead world to us. Science reveals to us a result of man's being spiritually dead; shows that death to be a profounder, more real thing, more truly worthy the name of death, than we had thought it. That death causes our life to be not truly life: a life to that which *is* not.

When we see that there is a deadness in man, scales fall from our eyes in reading the Bible; our thoughts are in harmony with it. For one chief part of the wonder of that book lies in this: that whereas we have taken it for granted that man has his life, the men who wrote those pages knew that it was wanting to him. They are saying what every man in his soul affirms to be true. But their words are truer than our thoughts: if we would do them justice, we must take them as they are, not bending them to our conceptions. The affirmation of the New Testament is that men are dead, and that they are to be made alive through Christ. But we have been compelled to make it affirm man's life, and have, therefore, given to its words whatever meaning we could best, and most

reverently, put upon them consistently therewith. For by reverent and loving hands has this violence been done ; not through fault, but unavoidably. How could it have been otherwise ? While science seemed to be demonstrating deadness throughout all nature, how could man's deadness be maintained ? Was there to be no life in the universe at all ? While to our ignorance the uniformity of nature seems a dead necessity, we cleave to the life and spirituality of man as the only basis on which a religious faith can rest. We are compelled to deny that man can be inert, compelled to assert for him freedom, compelled to take his state as the type and evidence of spiritual being. There has been no choice before us. We have been compelled to interpret the words of the New Testament conformably, for we could see otherwise no possibility of religion at all. N.B.

But can words more plainly affirm that man is not spiritual, and that he has not life ? Must we not have been laid under constraint, subjected to a perverting force, in interpreting the Scriptures ? Does not the recognition of death as the state of man, come from what source it may, set free the Bible from conceptions alien to its spirit ?

Nothing can be more striking than the simple way in which the deadness of man is laid down in the New Testament. It seems almost to be assumed, as if it were a thing known and evident, not needing to be proved or made matter of special demonstration. As is the existence of God to the Old Testament, so is the deadness of man to the New ; the fact central to

the whole, the postulate, as it were, on which the entire volume rests. May not a reason be, that the death of man is a central fact of the Old Testament also—that man died in Adam, becoming such as he is through that transgression? Therefore, when the New Testament writers take up the history and tell of life bestowed, of a true spiritual life bestowed on man, they do not attempt to prove the death, for that is the known, the evident fact, only theirs to reveal the deliverance from death. The burden of the New Testament is that man is to be made alive.

If this be the Gospel, what a glory follows. What light and joy break in upon this dark and miserable world. We may almost begin to see it as God sees it, and understand that our ignorance alone has clothed it in such appalling gloom. If this were man's life, truly it were a dark, a fearful, a mysterious world; a world to fill with despair the most trustful heart, and tax too much the strongest faith. But what if it be man's death? What should death bring but sin, and folly, and delusion, and agony, and vain grasping at shadows, and sickness, and remorse? What but this world should be, could be, the fruit of the death of man? Knowing the death and the redemption, the very spirit of prophets and apostles comes into our hearts, and we feel their words become simply true. Man is dead, therefore we are as we are; and God has saved us, and will make us new, yea, give us life, in Christ.

For the impossibility we have found in recognizing that Christ is the Saviour of the WORLD, in believing

that He will draw ALL men unto Him, arises from our belief that this state is the life of man; from our not having been able to see that the New Testament calls it death. If we can alter our point of view here, all the else insuperable difficulties in the absolute redemption of the world are gone. Clear and consistent, satisfying all demands of conscience, and heart, and intellect, stands before us the solution of the world: man, from death, is being made alive.

Surely we should let every book explain itself, and be judged by its own words. The Bible may be rejected as a guide; every one must judge for himself; but to interpret it against itself is surely to do it wrong. To ignore, when it speaks of death, that it has defined death, and expressly stated what it is, that it speaks of the present state of man as a dead state, is to deal it hard measure. How can we be surprised that, dealing thus with its language, we should be conducted to results which appal our hearts, and baffle our thoughts, and clothe in tenfold mystery the already too great mystery of life; that although we call it the Book of God, it should seem to remit still to the future those great questions of His love and justice, which it is the very life of our souls to know?

When we are seeking to understand the Bible, what does it matter what *we* think is life, what *we* think death must be? The sole question is, what does that book speak of as life, what does *it* term death? Using its words consistently with themselves, are not its statements summed up in this: that Christ has died for men that they may be saved from death,

and that believing in Him they shall have life? What affirmation can be plainer, if we remember that the same testimony has affirmed that men are dead? The two statements are integral portions of one whole. To separate them is to distort them.

We have been regarding the death from which Christ saves as temporal, as a thing which may be postponed. But it is eternal; it has relation to man's actual being, not to changing circumstances. Our embarrassment has arisen from our not having been able to perceive that man is now and truly dead; from bending all the words which declare it into another meaning. Some have said the death is future, man is condemned to die, in danger of dying; some, it is a figure; some, it is a death indeed in a spiritual sense, but different from that true death of misery which is to ensue hereafter. But all these opinions have had one basis: inability to believe that this state, which men like so well, could be the death spoken of in such terms of awe. From the death of man has come this thought; the saddest fruit, the most convincing proof, of the very death that is denied. For what is it we are saying, but even this, that mere wickedness, mere self-indulgence, merely being alienated from God, is not worthy to be called death, unless there be misery conjoined with it; that suffering is more to be feared than sinning? In that speaks the death of man, it needs no more words to prove it; that is death which makes man fear suffering more than sinning.

CHAPTER II.

OF LIFE.

FROM the state in which man is, Christ died to save him. His life he gives for man who has not life. So we are made to know God in the true sense of knowing, and in that knowledge have our part in the life eternal.

The difficulties which have rendered the nature of the eternal life bestowed by Christ a matter of dispute, resolve themselves when it is remembered that man is dead. For the affirmation of the New Testament is, that in Christ is given to men a life which makes them alive from death. Therefore this life is the opposite of the death in which they are. If that be eternal life, then is this eternal death. So that by the death which we know, we may know also what the life must be. But as we cannot know this life by sense, so neither can we know it intellectually. We cannot *think* it. A chief part of all the difficulty that has beset religious questions arises from our resolution to conceive the eternal. It cannot be conceived. It is to be known spiritually, actually; it will not be

put into our thought. Having learnt that by our intellect we can know no veritable fact at all, but only the appearance of things, how should we suppose that by the intellect we should know the eternal? We have made ourselves the standard, and, projecting our own deadness into an endless future, have called that eternal life. But God's thoughts are not as our thoughts.

The first necessity for a right attitude towards the eternal is, that we should abandon the supposition that our intellects can conceive it. Whatever is so conceived becomes in that very process no more eternal. When science and philosophy unite in testifying that the essence of things is not by them to be discovered, they do but reaffirm St. Paul's declaration, that spiritual things must be spiritually discerned. The eternal is known in living. It is the fact which the intellect has proved and confessed its inability to grasp; the one fact which all phenomena alike partially present. Let the intellect take its place, as dealing not with the very fact of being but with phenomena, which is now no more a religious dogma only, but the accepted result of physical and metaphysical research, and the meaning of the eternal ceases to be difficult, ceases to be fraught with pain either to the intellect or to the heart. The eternal ought to be, as it is, inconceivable by thought, else it could not be true being; else must it also be a passing show, like earthly things. To know the eternal is to Live.

If there is a deadness in man he is no standard;

his necessary conceptions have no authority, are necessarily wrong. That which truly is cannot be according to his thoughts, but he has to be made different, to be raised to a truer state of being and of feeling. Yet it is not difficult for us to know that there must be a state of being differently related to time from ours; a life to which the phenomenal things are not, as they are to us, realities. We grow old, the lapse of time affects and alters us; our being is in time, and is determined by its course. But not so is God. He is not older. Time and things in time are not to Him as they are to us, but as they truly are. To be in time is for mere phenomena to be our realities. God is as a rock beside which flows a stream; we are as a straw which it bears along. That is the eternal life which God possesses; of that man is to partake. "This is life eternal to know Thee." Eternal life is that which Christ had given to His disciples, because in seeing Him they had seen and known the Father also.

But it may be said: believing in Christ does not make us different; we remain just as we were, except in the feeling of our hearts. That is true. The individual life does not remove the deadness of man. That deadness, as it does not arise from a condition affecting the individual alone, so it cannot be removed by an individual change. Therefore, the man who has received eternal life from Christ is described thus by Paul: "I delight in the law of God after the inward man, but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and

bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members. We wait for the adoption, the redemption of our body." In him there is life struggling with death; a life that is given to him by Christ, a death that he partakes with humanity. The perfect redemption of the individual is in the redemption of man. When man is saved, then there is no more death.

For eternal life is not everlasting happiness; salvation is not being saved from misery. They are blessings which man's heart longs for infinitely more. In all his ignorance and wickedness, man is not sunk so low as not to feel that what he wants is something better than happiness, that the curse under which he groans is not suffering. He knows not what it is, nor how to utter it. His prayers are inarticulate, his toils a weary, undirected strife. But in his inmost soul he cries out to be delivered from himself, to be saved from the fatal spell that is upon him, whereby he must seek his own pleasure, must seek to gratify and to exalt himself; to be saved from passion, from the inward gnawing death that leads him into all evil, itself the greatest of all evils. He wants life, to BE, to act, to be no more a slave.

Eternal life is given us in Love: God's own Life put within man's breast. When man is made alive, we shall no more be compelled to pursue our own happiness, to seek for self-satisfaction. Love shall be made perfect in us. Our life shall be like God's, one with His who lives in giving only. And while the death yet cleaves to man, still we have the life. A

new being is within us ; a life, a knowledge, a relation, that we had not before. For we know God ; know Him truly as He is. Our whole thought of life and good is altered ; in giving up ourselves is all our glory, all our hope and wish. The whole fact of the universe is altered to us, for we know its life, and source, and centre.

We are delivered from the death that bound us. It is no more, as it was before, necessary to us to have concern for ourselves : by knowing God we have been made free. For knowing Him, first we trust Him perfectly, and feel no more the need of caring for ourselves ; and next, we loathe and detest ourselves that we are so unlike Him. All our heart and soul are changed. To have regard to self is hateful to us, for we know that that is death. All that is good or lovely in our eyes is in sacrifice of self. Suffering and loss have terrors for us no more. Our joy is to be one with God in giving : we want only the perfect deliverance from death ; we rejoice with joy unspeakable, knowing that God is making that deliverance complete in giving life to all men, we also being fellow-workers herein with him. Our life is eternal, we know that passing things are not the fact with which we have to do. We look for the crown of life in heaven ; the crown of life in love perfected in sacrifice made complete.

CHAPTER III.

OF DAMNATION.

IMOGEN.— I draw the sword myself. Take it and hit
The innocent mansion of my love, my heart.
PISANIO.— Hence, vile instrument ;
Thou shalt not damn my hand. *Cymbeline.*

He that doubteth is damned if he eat.

If thy hand offend thee, cut it off : it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire unquenchable ; where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched.

He that believeth not shall be damned.

OUR fatal habit of putting the eternal at a distance from us perplexes all our thoughts of Scripture. Therefore it is that we hardly dare to speak the word damnation, that to utter it seems like sacrilege ;—we have put it so far away. But that which the writers meant was not a thing they were afraid to speak of. They had not banished it into the future. The damnation of which they spoke was a thing that *is*, an eternal thing, the true and actual death of man. Men are damned in sinning, of which we think so little. Why is it that when the Bible speaks of death and of damnation as present things, we reduce them to so small a matter ; but when it uses the same words with

a reference to the future, immediately we fill them with a meaning the most awful we can conceive? Why do we make this distortion of its language; why put its words thus upon the rack, and cramp or stretch their meaning according to a rule of tenses? Do we not deal thus with the Bible, because this state of sinfulness is pleasant? We cannot believe that this is really the damnation because men like it. It never occurred to us that to like to be wicked could be to be damned. That was not bad enough.

Here we behold ourselves. We have taxed our thoughts to find the worst thing that could befall, and have invented suffering. Of all the many sins we must confess to God, is not this the head and chief? It is without excuse; for it is a violence not only to the light of nature, but to the plainest use of the very words on which the meaning has been forced. The fatal virus of the disease has turned the very medicine into poison. For to what end is the Bible written, but to make us know and feel the awfulness of sin, to make us afraid of sinning, to rouse the capabilities of our nature to a knowledge of what it is to be opposed to God, to instil into us a fear of wrong as wrong, to give us that new feeling which should make our hearts respond to words which describe a sinful state as the chief of evils? Why should not sin be treated as the most awful of things? Is it not so? Do not all men, as they approach to God, more and more feel it so? How, then, should God not speak so?

Sinning is damnation: self-indulgence is to be cast

into hell. These are the most fearful terrors, the chief of evils, in the sight of God. Let the words be read and tested. The difference between that thought and ours is the difference between life and death. Does not that which we most like or dread depend on what we are? Self-indulgence is hell; the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched, unbridled passions. It is better maimed to enter into LIFE, than having two hands to go into hell. But what life is we know: it is the opposite to self-indulgence, the being one with God; and unchecked passions are an unquenchable fire, a consuming flame that is never slaked, that burns more fiercely in the soul with each attempt to quench it. No words can be more simple than are these; it is their truth that makes them difficult. That the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched, proves them not physical. Physicalness is excluded by denial of its characteristic property of ceasing. A worm and fire not physical, what should they be but the devouring and consuming passions, consuming ever, yet leaving unconsumed; or how should a true-seeing man speak of them otherwise? "Enter into life with loss of all things, but be not self-indulgent, be not cast into hell."* The message of the New Testament to men is that they are damned, and they know that it is true. They do not fear a future damnation that is not like the present. They know that the burning passions in their hearts are never quenched,

* In Revelations xiv. 1., the words, "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night," are used to describe a state of men in this world.

nor can be quenched : that one desire sated, another takes its place ; that the imperious appetites are their plague and torment. This is eternal death, the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. It is here and now ; to see it we need only that our eyes be opened, we need only that the life that was in the men who wrote should be in us, who read.

Do we ask what hell-fire is ? God has answered us. "If thine enemy hunger feed him, and if he thirst give him drink ; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Here is shown us hell : God overcoming evil with good, consuming man by bounty. For what is it fills our hearts with passions, and burns us up with the fire of insatiable desires, but God's own gifts, the charms of nature, the good things with which He crowns our life ? God's gifts kindle the fire within us, His bounties are our torment. So he casts us into hell, surrounding us with good ; for love is fire. To be loved by a man whom we treat as an enemy, is to have coals of fire heaped upon our head. To be loved as God loves us, we being such as we are, is to be cast into a lake of fire.

God saves us from hell, saves us from damnation ; saves us through believing. He who believeth not shall be damned ; must be, certainly, inevitably, will be. He who does not know God to be such as Christ reveals Him, will be damned.* He will be wicked ; there is

* In the original language of the Bible there is no distinction for shall and will. Either word may be used as seems most expressive of the sense. Perhaps the beauty is impaired sometimes in our translation by the use of shall where will might be better.

no escape from sin, and the dominion of self, but by faith, for, save thereby, God cannot be known. There is no other name given among men whereby we must be saved. For if God be not known as Christ reveals Him, nothing else can avail to extricate man from death.

The men who wrote about damnation in the Scriptures saw things rightly; they had true perceptions, feelings justly attuned to the reality. They were living men. To them, to sin was to be damned; they put sinning above and before all other things as the great and chief calamity; the fact that there was a power, a life, that could save men from sinning, filled their hearts with wonder, and made their lips overflow with words that cannot be forgotten. That fact made them beside themselves; dwarfed all things else in their regard. And the heart of man responds to their words; what they have affirmed is true. Sinning is worse than suffering; we know and mean it in spite of our own words. To be damned is not to be miserable, but to be bad. The love of Christ, the sight of God as He truly is, must have power to save all men from sin. Christ must draw all men to Him.

But although damnation is not suffering, it is not therefore to be inferred that suffering is not threatened as punishment for sin. It is so threatened. All sin brings punishment: God will render to every man according to his works. But it is from damnation, and from death, that Christ saves us. His work has relation to the eternal. Our view here has been obscured, as everywhere, by treating the eternal as future. Throughout the Scripture, Christ is spoken

of as saving us from sin, from corruption, from vain conversation, from this evil world, never from pain; from that which is the worst thing, not from that which we most fear. Our familiarity with the latter idea renders us unconscious what we read. The death that is our present actual state, our condition in relation to the eternal, is that evil, fearful thing from which Christ has died to redeem us. Our thoughts being other than those of the Bible, we have with great effort adapted its words to meet them; we have transferred them from the eternal and spiritual that *is*, to the suffering or happiness that we look forward to. Our conceptions are so moulded to this latter idea, that it is difficult to look simply at the words of Scripture, and see how much more is in its declarations than in our thoughts. Christ died for the world, to save it from the curse of death under which it is; not a future death of misery, but an actual death of worse than misery; a death which involves our liking that which is evil.

We find it hard to believe that damnation can be a thing that men like. But does not what every being likes depend on what it is? Is corruption less corruption, in man's view, because worms like it? Is damnation less damnation, in God's view, because men like it? And God's view is simply the truth. Surely one object of a revelation must be to show us things from God's view of them, that is, as they truly are. Sin truly is damnation, though to us it is pleasure. That sin is pleasure to us, surely is the evil part of our condition.

Suppose there were a child who liked to eat dirt, should we not tell him that it was filthy? But how could he think that to be filthy which he liked? Would he not suppose that we referred to some consequences, to some future, which he would not like? When God warns us of damnation, present and future, we, liking it, think He is speaking of consequences. But the instructed child learns that to eat dirt is filthy, then he understands his teacher; man learns that sin is damnation, then he understands his Maker.

A sinful state is eternal death. It is death in relation to that absolute being which the eternal denotes. The application of the word translated eternal to an everlasting duration arises from our misapprehension of man's present state, from the false conception we entertain of all things, through our ignorance of man's want of life. Men are now dead or damned eternally; a state from which eternal life raises them. An eternal state is one which relates, not to our conditions or circumstances, but to our very being. Christ gives eternal life, a life that makes us truly and absolutely living; not such life as the physical, which leaves us dead, being life only in seeming. So sin is true and absolute death, not like the physical death which does but appear to be so. In sin we have consciousness of death. "Sin revived," says St. Paul, "and I died." Doubtless man shall not like sin for ever. He must feel it differently, feel it the greatest misery. But how can that be to be damned? Surely that were rather to be saved.

CHAPTER IV.[1]

OF REDEMPTION.

Foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

THE great fact of the New Testament is the redemption of the WORLD ; the saving of all men through Christ. Perhaps no single statement is so often repeated, or asserted in so many different forms. It would be of no avail to enumerate the passages ; for the most part they are well known. We have rather to ascertain why they have been interpreted to mean the salvation of part of the world, and the final loss of the rest. What necessity has acted on our minds to compel us to that conclusion, not less against the apparent meaning of those passages, than against our own deepest hopes and wishes ?

The reasons have been of two kinds : in part the apparent meaning of other passages of Scripture, in part the evident fact that so many men do not believe, but die without participating in religion. Of these two elements, the latter is that which truly determines our opinion. For no passages can be plainer, or more

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emphatic, than those which seem to declare the absolute salvation of all men. No words can be more direct, or apparently decisive, than such as these: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." "God sent not His son into the world to condemn the world, but that THE WORLD through Him might be saved." If there be others which seem as directly to affirm that all are not saved, then it must be on other evidence that the interpretation is decided. One class of expressions will be taken as the standard, according to our general conceptions of the world and of man; and the others will be conformed to them.

Accordingly, the absolute salvation of man has been given up, because we could not otherwise understand that which we see in the world, and especially the fact that men die unsaved. That one circumstance outweighs in our estimate all other arguments. For we have not been able to conceive the world otherwise than as a probation for eternity. On this theory we interpret all those statements of Scripture which declare that all men are to be made partakers of life through Christ. It is well that we should see clearly what we do. For in truth, familiarity with the doctrine of a partial salvation of men has so moulded the thoughts of the greater part of the believers in the Bible, that they no longer see that the passages which affirm salvation of all have even an apparent opposition to their idea. A certain meaning is so constantly associated with them, that men have almost ceased to be aware that they might have any other; their force and bearing are entirely lost. How many of those

who think that some men go after death to a final and unredeemable ruin, are aware that there is in the Bible a single passage which opposes a difficulty to that opinion?

The doctrine of a probation for an everlasting destiny, of the final misery and loss of a part of mankind and happiness of another part, is man's natural supposition, from which the New Testament, revealing to us God and life and death as they truly are, is the means of our deliverance. For a probation for eternity implies that this is man's life, that men are not dead; it implies that men are not in eternity, but that the eternal is a thing to come; it implies that men are not now damned, but only in danger of it. Therefore we feel so much difficulty in interpreting the New Testament, which says the opposite of all these things. Convinced by its evidences, have we not been trying to submit our thoughts to its words, while yet retaining a fundamental conception of ourselves, which those words emphatically set aside? It refuses to be interpreted on the doctrine of man's life. Precisely there it is, that its thoughts are above our thoughts; so much above them, so much truer, so much in advance, that we could not understand it. The question of religion turns upon this point: Is this state, or is it not, the LIFE of man.

If we can see that man truly wants life, there is no more difficulty respecting the absolute salvation: for probation is thereby excluded, and that man necessarily supposes his own state to be life, can afford no evidence that it is so; none to weigh against the

fact that he perceives deadness all around him, and finding no eternal in anything with which he has to do, thinks the eternal must be to come. Too plain it is that man has not Life—the being to whom the eternal IS not.

It is true that we are practically under a probation: we are dealt with according to our works, are under a system of trial, of rewards and punishments. But this is not being under probation for eternity. These are means through which the work that is to be done in man is accomplished; means through which his death is removed, and he is brought to be no more the subject of rewards and punishments. They do not give the character of probation to his state, in relation to the eternal; and the express statements of Scripture exclude it. Only our own conceptions could have made us so interpret the statements which affirm the punishment of evil-doers. The latter in no way involves the former. Children are subjected to a system of trial, and are dealt with by rewards and punishments, but a school is not a state of probation.

Have not the words in the New Testament, which appear to affirm the final loss of part of mankind, received that meaning against their natural and necessary sense; have not we ourselves put into the Scripture the teaching which we find there? These passages are of three kinds: those which speak of eternal punishment, those which speak of death as the result of sinning, and those which relate to election. But reflection will remove the conception that such words are opposed to the absolute salvation of the

world. They are, rather, words which necessarily flow from it. Let the statements which affirm that the world is to be saved through Christ be first received, and all these passages, which seem to us so opposite, conform themselves to it perfectly. There is not even a semblance of opposition in the words themselves. For the eternal is not future: the state of corruption is eternal punishment, or ruin, or perdition:* a state from which men are set free by having eternal life given to them. Election is a simple fact before our eyes. Does not St. Paul, speaking of the Jews, say first, "The election hath obtained it, and the rest were hardened," and add immediately afterwards: "So all Israel shall be saved"? The passages which speak of death as the result of individual sin, such as "the end of these things is death," present no embarrassment when the twofold aspect under which men are regarded is borne in mind. The individual's death results from his own sin; the death in which all are is a condition affecting man. Sinning truly leads to death, but it is from death that Christ redeems. He makes the dead alive.

What we learn from the Bible is the fearfulness of this state which is ours; this state which men like so well, the evil of which we naturally regard so lightly, and yet feel truly to be so fearful when once our eyes

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* Very remarkable is the expression *κόλασις αἰώνιος* (Matt. xxv. 46), an eternal discipline, or chastisement, a correction in respect to the eternal. *κόλασις* means pruning, as of a tree. So strongly is the meaning of discipline in it, that it is used for chastened, in the sense of moderate, desires. *Arist. Ethics*, iii. 12.

are opened. Shall we never understand that we may be in hell, and like it; that of all evils that is the worst and most to be deplored, and the one of which if God speaks to us, He must warn us in the terms of deepest awe and most touching love? Speaking of liking evil, must not He say: "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye DIE?" He whose Life is shown us in the Cross? How should He speak of *pain* as death, whose heart we see in Jesus? And for the power which should make us flee, the terror by which we should be moved to escape, does not God open our eyes to see things as they are? By showing us Himself, He makes us fear the true evil. He makes us fear that which we did not fear, by making us know that which we did not know. Can he, who believes that he sees God in Christ, and that in HIM is the LIFE of man, fail to feel that sin is the most awful punishment; must he not be saved from damnation?

Upon the conception that the world is not absolutely to be saved, no view can be taken that does not bring us apparently into direct opposition with some words of Scripture. So the Calvinist and Arminian systems continue to divide the world, and with no prospect of reconciliation. For each side finds some of its positions clearly in the words of Scripture; each finds other words which it can scarcely embrace. Men are Calvinists or Arminians according as they think most of the universal dominion of God, or of the freewill of man; whether they most demand justice or grace in the divine dealings. Their fatal agreement in postponing the eternal to the future, and

seeing death in suffering, renders all other agreement impossible. Very striking it is to observe how one man rejects a provision of salvation for all, which takes effect upon some only; not perceiving that his own conception, of a salvation not provided for all, is even more impossible to others than the thought that any for whom Christ died shall not be saved is to himself. Yet is nothing more simple than the union that seems so far off. Well does the Calvinist affirm that all for whom Christ died must be saved; well the Arminian, that Christ died for the world, for all men. What then prevents that they should unite in affirming that the world must be saved? This only: that both have a certain idea about man and human life; that both think the eternal is an everlasting future, that both think men cannot now be dead, in the worst sense in which the New Testament speaks of death.

The doctrine of election receives beautiful elucidation from those words, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate;" for those who are saved are not few, but a company "whom no man can number." Evidently the words refer to the facts of life: few enter the strait gate, but many go in the broad path which leads to death; for "she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth."

The numerous passages, especially in the parables, which speak of the separation of the righteous and the wicked, and the various terms in which the future punishment of some is described, come to our minds as if they were in opposition to a salvation which

should be effective in the case of all. Yet why should we conceive them to be in opposition? Why should we array against each other passages which do not clash? If the salvation of the world be absolute, if all men shall be brought to Christ, are those passages the less true? There is no reason to modify their language, or to endeavour to evade their meaning. The redemption of the world from death does not contravene punishment, does not involve a confounding of the evil and the good. Let the absolute salvation be believed; do those other passages lose their meaning, their force, their necessity? Sin shall be punished, the workers of iniquity shall be banished from God; they shall be overwhelmed with "eternal ruin," "drowned in destruction;" yet none the less shall Christ draw all men to Him. None the less is "the free gift come upon all men unto justification of life." The absolute salvation of all men is an explicit statement of the New Testament, an emphatic and unequivocal declaration on the part of the very men who affirm the supposed opposite things. Nothing more is needed to prove them not opposed than simply to believe them all.

Nor is it, indeed, difficult to understand why men, whose aim and work it was to reveal the salvation of the whole race of man, should have dwelt so largely on the doom of the evil, the punishment of sin. It behoved them, above all, not to ignore the divine justice, to treat lightly the demands of law, to seem to confound good and evil. Their part, especially, it must have been, to show that the demands of the

conscience were not set aside by the salvation they affirmed, the wrong and guilt of human life not disregarded. How else should they have been believed? There are many who tell us that the world shall come all right at last, that there is nothing so much amiss; but we cannot believe them. Our conscience tells a different tale, demands a different issue. But when the very men who, more than all others, have stirred our conscience, opened our eyes to the majesty of the divine law, the hatefulness of sin, the impossibility of evil escaping vengeance; when they go on to affirm that, with all this, as the sum and conclusion of the whole, the WORLD is to be redeemed from death, and that God shall reconcile ALL THINGS to Himself, how should we disbelieve them? on what ground base our disbelief, what reason allege any more for refusing the Gospel that they preach? They have themselves anticipated all objections, made their own all the ground that might be taken against them. Do we say: that God must punish sin? so have they said: that the holy must be distinguished from the sinful, and a broad contrast of fate allotted to them? so have they said: that God will say, "Depart from me all workers of iniquity?" so have they said: that tribulation and anguish must be the portion of those that do evil? so have they said: that death must be the wages of sin, and the wicked be destroyed with an absolute, an eternal ruin, the opposite of eternal life? so have they said. With all this, ruling and reconciling and crowning all, weaving all into one scheme of glory, comes the proclamation of the Christ, the

Redeemer of the world; who, first subduing all things to Himself, shall lay down His honours at His Father's feet, and God be all in all; death swallowed up in victory.

Shall we dare to put against this our pre-conceptions? Shall we disbelieve the Gospel, because we do not see how men are to be saved after the death of the body? What avails our ignorance to overthrow God's word? If we examine ourselves, do we not find that we have moulded our opinion of the whole Gospel upon the supposition that we know what happens when men die? On this assumption it is that we have converted the proclamation of the redemption of the world, to believe which is Life, into an offer of salvation to be accepted before the body's death or lost for ever. But how should the dying of the body prevent men from believing in Christ? How do we know the nature of the change which passes upon men in that so-called death? It is our supposition, indeed, that the Bible affirms that there is no salvation after death, but have we ever looked to see if it be truly so?*

But not only is the salvation of the world affirmed so emphatically, in direct terms, by the New Testament writers, it is the spirit and life of all they say. Allusions to it break out continually, as if it were the great subject of their thoughts, the great joy of their

* The passages commonly quoted to prove this idea might furnish the best evidence that it is foreign to the Scriptures. "As the tree falleth so it lieth," for example. For further remarks on this subject, see Dialogue 2.

hearts, the centre about which their life revolved. It seems the source and consummation of all their message. "He is the propitiation for our sin," says St. John; "and not for ours only, but for those of the whole world." The former could not suffice without the latter, of which it is, indeed, but an offshoot and consequence. For, that Christ takes away the sin of the world is the essence of the Gospel; the salvation of the individual arises out of, and flows from, the salvation of mankind. If Christ did not give Life to the world, it were given to no man. A common death and curse is ours, a common deliverance alone avails to save us.

And in St. Paul's language a constant reference to the same thought is seen. Inseparable from the curse and condemnation, from the threatenings and warnings, ever comes the fact of the redemption; because they never forgot the redemption, the apostles never forgot the curse; they were able to assert the righteous judgment of God, the unswerving justice, the awfulness of the damnation, because the salvation was ever present to their thought. Our tongues falter, and our hearts fail, when we would assert the death that is the wages of sin, because we see not the fulness of the life that is the gift of God. The letting go of the absolute redemption benumbs our grasp of all the rest. We dare not speak as they spoke, because we are not thinking as they thought. How could we say with St. Paul, "Therefore God shall send them a strong delusion that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believe not the truth,

but have pleasure in unrighteousness?" Can we picture to ourselves what man it must have been who, thinking as we do of damnation, could have written those words? But if to be damned is to do sinful things, and if from this damnation all men must be saved, why should it not be even so? Why should we shrink from words which do but express the facts of the world's history? God sends men strong delusions, and they believe lies, and are damned. They are damned that they may be saved. Even as God includes all in unbelief that He may have mercy upon all; or as by the law is the knowledge of sin. For how could man be saved except through sin? Men are not evil because they do wickedly, but they do wickedly because they are evil. Only by the wickedness of our deeds could we learn the evil of our hearts, or know our need of being made new. If the world were not wicked, if men under temptation and delusion did not run into crime, fall into damnation, Christ had died in vain to save it. To have been not sinful, man must have been left in hopeless death.

For the history of the world is the making man alive; that is the resolution of the mystery: Man being raised from a state so evil that he might not continue in it, a state of which God's very being necessitates the destruction. All this sin, all this woe, must be, for death must be destroyed. Man cannot be left the self-regarder, the alien from Life that he has been. At all expense of sinning and of suffering he must be freed. The weary waste of human life becomes quite new when we see what it is

for. God's glory is the light which glows even in the lurid flames of hell; one glory with heaven's own brightness, the glory of eternal love. The fire that consumes all evil, lights with perpetual day the heavenly city. "God is glorified alike in those that believe and in those that perish." He is glorified in sin; even in chief degree glorified in sin; for He bears sin, bears it for man. That evil thing which His soul hateth He endures that man may live. He is glorified in sin, as when a righteous man bears wrong and insult, unavenged, for love. Then and therein is glory, the glory wherewith God was glorified when Christ hung upon the cross, the glory for which He prayed: "Glorify me NOW, with thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was."

God bears sin for love; for love of man. We see Him in the Man who bore our sins; he shows us therein what He is. No heart is tortured by sin and misery like His, whose prerogative it is to bear alone the name of Love. No bosom throbs so deep with pity, or burns so intense for justice. But He endures for love of man. The infinite patience faints not, nor is weary. Nor hastens; for there is no delay. The slow progress of the painful hours passes not too sadly, the catalogue of wrongs and woes grows not too full. The Father's eye watches the unfolding life, and rejoices over the Son that from the dead is made alive again. For He has shown us how He sees mortal life; the type and pattern of humanity, the Man to whom it was given to have life in Himself,

has revealed it. It is interpreted in Christ. Life, His own life, given to the dead; for in Him God reconciles the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.

CHAPTER V.

OF HEAVEN.

Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?

It cannot be denied that the Bible has sometimes been laid as a yoke upon the human heart. If any man think that a repudiation of its authority can proceed only from the evil part of our nature, he has more to learn respecting humanity; he may have much to learn respecting himself. For is it not sometimes taught that the Bible makes self-interest the basis of religion? Is not that reproach inseparable from the doctrine that life and death are happiness and suffering? Let these ideas be refined to the utmost, the pollution of self-love cannot be purged from them. Men will still say that religion is but another form of self-seeking, and not deliverance from it. The world rejects a Gospel clothed in a garment which makes it seem but the reflex of themselves. The substitution of future happiness and misery for life and death, of something to be got for ourselves for deliverance from the necessity of self-regard, is the death of Christianity. It cannot rob

indeed, the death of Christ of its saving power over individual men, but it despoils the Gospel of its prerogative, and quenches in darkness the life that should be the light of men.

For the absolute salvation of the world must be denied, if salvation be identified with a future happiness, with the escape from misery or suffering. Necessarily denied; for so conceived the conscience protests against it. That wicked men should pass to a happy future after death could not be admitted; the eternal laws of right demand a different result. The everlasting misery, which seems to be the only alternative, is accepted of necessity. It is *our* nature to think of the future in this way, to conceive it as the scene of enjoyment or of suffering; and to erect our system of religion on the basis that the eternal life must be, in its essential elements, such as ours is now. We stipulate for ourselves that we shall be happy, that we shall have enjoyment. We hold forth to men that heaven consists in highest, purest pleasures, but in pleasures still.

A very different thought, indeed, is in the heart of many who hold this language. By the happiness of heaven they mean love only. But the doctrine is that which must be spoken of; the doctrine not the feeling is presented to the world. Men for the most part are not told of heaven as love or life, but as happiness; of hell as not loving or death, but as misery. This is the Gospel that man rejects, and does right to reject. The world thirsts and groans for life; it is weary and in despair for lack of love;

but a future happiness it will not have, a future misery it does not fear. With desperate resolve it clutches the present; with a madness no experience can tame, men pursue wealth, pleasure, glory; the undying worm within them cries for ever: Give. That which is now is that which is for them. It is right: the voice of God within them bids them cleave to that which IS. The present is the eternal. If the world would have accepted a salvation from that which is future, it could not have been saved; for its ruin is eternal. The grasp upon the present is a blind protest for the eternal against the temporal. To hold to the present is not to take the seeming for the fact; really to cleave to that which is, men must know that which is; they must know the eternal. Men are deceived; they perish for lack of knowledge. God has sent them a strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, for they believe that the eternal is not now; that things which perish in the using are the facts that ARE. In very truth they do believe that a man's life consists in the abundance of the things that he possesses; that life is not eternal life, but transient pleasures, pursuits, activities. They do not KNOW, and thus are lost and ruined, for phantoms sway them as realities; they make their LIFE in that which does but seem. Therefore to save them, God shows them that which is, the true eternal fact which they see not, although 'tis all around them. Himself He shows them, His own being, His own life, partaker of their death, that they may know the eternal in utterest sacrifice of self.

Knowing what salvation is, it no more does violence to the conscience that all men should be saved. It subverts no justice, that the power of Christ's love should subdue in every man all self-regard, all the force of sin and of desire: that, in the redemption of man from death, all men should be made complete in love, and, striving with death, should utterly sacrifice themselves, and endure like Him. For this is the salvation which God bestows: to be one with Christ, who while He trod the earth was in the bosom of the Father; and shows us heaven in sorrow.

Christ saves us, not from suffering, but from death; not from pain, but from that which makes us flee from pain. The men whom Christ has saved are known for eminence in suffering. The stream of Life runs red with blood. "They were destitute, afflicted, tormented; they wandered in deserts, and mountains, and dens and caves of the earth." To them "it was given to suffer for His name." Life is, not to be afraid of suffering: to be so perfect in love that loss and sacrifice, extremest and utter sacrifice, the having nothing but giving and bearing all things, is perfect joy. A life which we cannot fully have while we are in this earthly state, while man is wanting in his life; but by the bestowment of which on man his deadness is taken away. For herein differs the physical from the spiritual, man from God; that to man sacrifice is pain; love brings suffering, that which we dislike and would fain avoid. We groan, being burdened with this weight of flesh, which, making us

feel the work of love as evil, puts perfect life beyond our reach. For to God, and to us when man is wholly made alive, that which we call sacrifice, the entire self-abnegation, has no pain. There is nothing to which the loving act is unwelcome. For the character of our present state is, that the action which love prompts is painful; there is that in us which is opposed to love. Here is the evil of our condition; we like that which is not good. When man is made perfect then shall that which is now painful to him be no more painful. Perfect sacrifice is heaven to those in whom love is perfect. Not in our circumstances can be the change from earth to heaven, it must be in us; in the taking away that deadness by which man is as he is. Then is perfect sacrifice, solely and only giving, no more a pain. We cannot think it, but we know it. In our hearts we know it. Not in vain has Christ shown us God. Our thoughts are truer than our words; that which we believe and hope for, than that which we profess. In heaven we look not for enjoyment but for love. Only certain intellectual conceptions, notions which we have formed on abstract questions, interfere. Our speculative ideas make us speak of heaven as we do not feel, and the world laughs us to scorn. For the Gospel of happiness and misery is not true to the heart of man. It does not touch the strongest chords in human nature, the true movers of human life. Men know indeed that they love self, that they are guided by self-regard and pleasure, that they do seek what they like; but they also despise themselves for it; they utterly contemn that life, and treat it with bitter

scorn. That is not humanity. It should be no strange doctrine to man to hear that he is dead; who could have said it more plainly than himself, or in words of deeper mortification and despair, scarcely veiled by the thin disguise of mockery.

It is not true to the human heart, it is not fair to man, to come to him with a religion that concerns his happiness, his escape from suffering. Such a religion cannot save the world. Can he be saved from himself? Can he be made different in his inmost being, raised from regarding his own pleasure, from seeking his own interests? This is the question religion has to solve for him. The question for humanity, this day, concerns the resurrection of the dead.

Is not that which God gives to man in saving him, in making him alive, the power of giving; of true and absolute self-giving like His own? Is not that our *want?* is it not truly what we long for, and yet do not know? That is the Eternal, that is God's own life; that is the water, drinking of which man shall thirst no more. For it were mere stagnation and satiety, to get so that we should never want again: that were the end of all enjoyment, it were merely mean and small capacity. We are to be delivered from the necessity of getting; from that which makes hell, and is the very bond of death. Getting and enjoying have been tried all these ages: amid God's richest gifts, amid His infinite bounty, man has lived to get; and the result we know. In no form or way could that continue everlastingly. Can we be

made givers, be made alive? To be made different in ourselves, so that we shall not be for ever grasping for our own, that is the true, the eternal life.

We suffer ourselves to speak as if the cause of our evils were in God, and not in ourselves: as if our unhappiness were from the poorness of His gifts, because He has surrounded us with conditions so imperfect, with pleasures so unsatisfying. But it is not so. God's benefits know no abatement nor increase. He gives us all things richly to enjoy, crowning our life with loving-kindness. Man banishes the glory; and seeing not, thinks darkness is around him. Heaven has no other joy or glory than is now, but man shall be different: active where now he is passive; partaker of the life which now he feels to crush and to subdue him. For heaven nothing must or could be changed but man; nothing but the death destroyed or taken away. Not less of sacrifice, of being utterly given up: not less of love without us, only more love within.

We deceive ourselves if we think that altering the form of our getting could make a heaven; the self would be our torment still. It is not the things we have to bear that crush and ruin us; it is our necessity to get, our want of something for ourselves, our constant craving: that is our perdition. God must give Himself to us; He must be in us; His life be ours. So we shall want no more; have no more emptiness to fill. We shall be like Him, able to be content with giving. There shall be no more want; the infinite life shall fill us; the absolute love and

sacrifice, in which alone eternal being is, shall be ours, shall be enough for us. Evil can be to us no more, nor sorrow; for all sacrifice, all giving up, all that is now enduring, resigning, bearing, being tortured, set aside, and downcast, then shall be our joy. The death that makes it pain shall have been done away. What is it that never faileth, which alone vanisheth not away, but the love that endureth all things, beareth all things, seeketh not her own? This shall never cease. Would we put away self-sacrifice from heaven? It cannot be. Heaven must be self-sacrifice made perfect; ceasing to be sacrifice, only because complete.

Therefore must Christ have been a man of sorrows; therefore must He have borne our sins and carried our sorrows, and taken on Himself the chastisement of our peace. He had to show us God, to make us see what He is: by life in death to make known life to death. In that which we call sorrow and humiliation and sore distress, all things borne and sacrificed for all, God is seen; and so only can He be seen by us, while we are as we are, and love brings pain with it. Heaven is, to be and do what Christ was and did, and find no pain in it, because no more is there in us anything that is opposed to love.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE RELIGION OF NATURE.

HEAVEN is happiness, the deliverance of man from all that makes him subject to sorrow; but not, therefore, can it be sought as happiness; for happiness is in the leaving off that search. There is no happiness like that of love, but it cannot be obtained by seeking. Love must be given us, must carry us away, must become our nature and our life. That which makes the happiness is gone when happiness is sought. Is the love of God less sacred than that of wife or friend? Can He accept a love which friend or wife would repudiate with disdain? We are compelled to love Him; that is the overmastering passion of our souls, the joy of our hearts, our life and breath. Such passion we have felt faint traces of before, when most of loveliness has moved our souls to ecstasy, and bowed our hearts to worship. When we could not contain ourselves for joy, and earth was glorified by one presence everywhere, then was revealed to us the image and the shadow of the love of God. We love Him; it is the one fact of our life which flows into all

things. To love Him is but to know Him, but to awake from sleep, to have sight given to our eyes, life to our hearts. One presence glorifies all the world, for all things are the presence of Him we love. All passions in this passion receive their fulfilment, reveal their true meaning, become absorbed, and die into life. All human passions mean the love of God, but men know it not. They clasp in ignorance that which fades and passes and is not, not knowing the eternal joy for which their souls cry out.

How should love be spoken or explained? We love and are happy. We do not want, we do not pursue. We want to be, to do, that which He wills and does. We want to give, to bear, to sacrifice ourselves. We love the Infinite, the Eternal, Him in whom, and for whom, and to whom are all things, whose will is done in heaven and earth. His will is our will; we have nothing to get; we love Him. For He is the Redeemer: He takes away our iniquities, delivers us from sin, and will make us perfect and unblameable. He takes away the sins of the whole world, and will be death's destroyer. The Vanquisher of evil by good, who shows us what it is to LIVE; how should we not love Him? How should we cease to rejoice and to be glad in Him? The joy flows too full, it overflows and carries us away.

It is difficult to love God because we do not see that He saves the WORLD; and this we do not see because we make the New Testament express our own conceptions, instead of suffering it to speak its own language. We make it even below ourselves, and

cannot escape from the feeling that we could conceive a better history for man than God in his sovereignty has ordained. It is this crushes our affection, paralyses our hearts, makes our piety so lifeless. God's redemption is the making MAN alive; the making all men perfect in self-sacrifice, uniting them to Himself: not some men saved from future misery, but all delivered from this eternal death. We think Christ came to give us that which we most wish for, happiness; to save us from suffering which we most fear; but he came to give us a better gift, to save us from a worse evil. He came to give us life, that we might feel the true good; light, that we may see the true evil; to cure us, that our desires may be different. Christ is the physician; He heals the sick humanity, allays the burning fever in its veins, calms its delirious passion, dispels its dreams, soothes its mad appetites, satisfies its wants, restores it whole and in its right mind to God. He gives us LIFE. With Him we are raised up from the dead.

Our conceptions are of no weight, because man is wanting. We are no standard; it is we that have to be altered, a different existence is to be made ours. Never should we use the words which say that man was made in God's image, without remembering that the same words affirm that man is not as God made him. We look in vain for God's image in ourselves. That is to seek the living among the dead. Not in our powers, our arbitrary will, our reach of thought, our dignity of virtue, not in any of these things is God's likeness to be found. Show us thy glory, O

God, that we may see Thee. Come forth from the clouds and darkness that are about thy throne, that the resplendent light may scatter all the shade. We will gird up our hearts to bear the terror, our shuddering souls shall face the awful splendour. Let the majesty of thy power be seen, though it crush us and we die.

God doth reveal Himself:—a Man hanged on a gallows. It is too much, O God! Art thou so much above us; are we so unlike thee? is this the power whereby thou art able to subdue all things to thyself; all power in heaven and earth given unto love? O foolish heart to tremble and be afraid of God! O idle sense to heap up images of vastness! O proud and evil thought that God was like us, only more. Well might vague terrors haunt our souls, and secret dread, and enmity, and the vain wish to hide; for we thought God was like ourselves. Unlike us most of all in this, that while we turn away from our own image, erected to us for the God we do not know, HE seeks us, loves us, will not let us go; will make us know him, will make us friends. For to know HIM is to love.

We cannot see God as He is, for we see ourselves instead. We cannot see Him in nature, for we put our own deadness into it. We draw our thought of God not from that which IS, but from that which we feel to be, and make Him a self-seeker like ourselves. God is not to be seen in nature, as we see it. The fact would teach us God, but the phenomenon will not. He is such as the true being of nature would

show Him ; not such as we infer from nature as we feel it. We do not see love in nature ; we persuade ourselves we do, and so make our dim vision dimmer still. The love we fancy there is such love as ours. Not even such. Nothing can more pervert the religious sense than calling what *we see* in nature the love of God ; this "ruling providence," this exercising of power, this giving enjoyment, even if it were much more perfect than it is. This is man's love ; this is our way of loving, as far as the earth is beneath the heavens from any that can be called divine. There is no sacrifice in it. 'Tis like a rich man who, happy and comfortable himself, takes pleasure in making his dependants so ; keeps good order, protects virtue, and does, without trouble, everything benevolent. It corrupts the heart to think of God's love so. If we would truly see God's love, we must seek it where Christ sought it, in sorrow, and sin, and agony ; in that which is wretchedest and vilest. Not in the beauty and delight of earth, which cost Him nothing, but in darkest woe and fearfullest despair. God's love is seen in sacrifice. When we can look on nature thus, seeing in all that is saddest and most evil the fact of perfect and intensest love ; life given for the dead ; when we can interpret nature by the cross of Christ, then we see God in it ; but not till then.

We cannot express it, God forbid ! how could that be infinite which man could say ? and what need to say it, what scope for words, what place for idle breath to draw faint images ? The fact unutterable, inconceivable, is here. In death endured for man,

God's own heart wrung with human agony and bowed to willing shame, there and there only can we see the love of God. So HE loves. Let us not profane that holy word, the love of God, which, seen even so, is but darkly seen, as man's fainting eye can bear, not the true brightness of that glory, but the image veiled and softened for our sight: let us not profane that word to aught less worthy. Till we can see nature as one with this, we do not see it; we search in vain in it for God. "Behold I go forward, but He is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive Him; on the left hand where He doth work, but I cannot behold Him; He hideth Himself on the right hand, that I cannot see."

The secret of the universe is learnt on Calvary. In that death the life of nature is revealed. For it is love, perfect and utter sacrifice; it is the life that shall be ours when man is made alive. Then deadness shall no more be felt around; love shall know love, and life within shall answer to the life without.

CHAPTER VII.

OF FREEWILL.

Love is the visible form of freedom.

THERE is nothing of which men are more conscious than of their failure to solve questions which are of the greatest interest to them, a solution of which would be received as an invaluable boon, not only for theory but for practice. There is no necessity of their condition to which they submit more reluctantly, than to this enforced acceptance of that which they cannot understand. It is not too much to say that no thinking man is satisfied : the cherished expectation of knowing more fully in a future world sufficiently proves the feeling of loss and want, which the acquiescence in mysteries does but disguise.

It were an infinite joy if the mystery could be taken away from our life, and we could know the true answers to those earnest questionings, which men from earliest to latest times have addressed to themselves and to all things around them. No heart would not beat high at the prospect, would not purchase it at any sacrifice. The promise rouses now

indeed but a feeble interest; for faith has grown weary, and disappointment by long use passes for success. We gild the chains upon our hands; almost we have persuaded ourselves that they bespeak no slavery; but the true heart is not deceived. The fettered limbs are motionless, that the galling be not felt: the frantic struggles to break free have given place to calm; but it is the calmness of despair, that mocks itself with laughter, and hides its writhing agonies with boastful words. It is despair; that mimics trust, that compels itself to resignation, that smiles the bitter smile of scorn, that despises, disbelieves, or believes because it will believe, while the cruel doubt within, the cruel sin without, torture the faith they cannot slay. Despair—intensest, bitterest despair—drives its victims in the path of pleasure, pursues their steps with madness of desire, gives them no rest day or night, seeking happiness for ever. Despair proclaims its gospel: take care of yourself, obtain happiness, flee from pain, ask no questions about the world, but secure your own well-being.

How can this be the life of man? how can his life be in getting? when the true life, that which he wants, is the opposite of getting, is in self-giving only. How can the remedy for human ills be in the persuasion that we cannot know? Life is to know; death broods over us in this unnatural calm, this falsely-called content. Doubt about God, doubt for man, doubt of absolute right, of the perfectness of love; the dread that there is something which is opposed to these,

which no light could make clear, no better knowledge reconcile: these are the things which eat into our hearts, and leave us no alternative but reckless strife or deadly apathy. Not doubts that we would express in words; doubts that we crush like sins, and deny, and prove that they ought not to be; only they are the worse for being crushed, the blacker that we will not face them; poisoning the very springs of piety and making it false even of love to say, "She seeketh not her own."

All comes from measuring God's work by ourselves, taking our feeling as the standard of that which is. There is no more doubt if we will verily believe that we are deceived. The secret of man's perplexity is, that he believes himself. Feeling himself free, he affirms his freedom, asserts his life; but Christ's words affirm that he is free only when God makes him so, dwelling in him and giving him a life he had not. We have mistaken freewill for freedom. The deception we have been under, its source and necessity, the whole history of thought on the subject of freewill, are transparent, when we recognize the central fact of human history, that man wants life. True freedom belongs to manhood; the freewill of which we are conscious belongs to death. Freewill is not denied in denying man's freedom; but freedom is asserted to be a different thing. God is free, to whom sin is impossible. Man is free when sin is impossible to him.

For if our conception of freewill be analysed, it will be found in itself to indicate, and correspond to,

a state of defect; the essence of it is, that the action should be not necessary. It is not necessary to man to do right. It is worthy of remark that the ideas of rightness, or holiness, and of wrong, are differently related to necessity. For while necessity excludes sin, and an action which is necessitated loses the character on account of which we can attribute criminality to it, the case is not the same with holiness. The highest holiness is necessary holiness. Necessity is wanting in respect to man. He is not therefore free, but he is conscious of freewill. He is under law, and justly amenable to reward and punishment. When he is freed from this state of defect, necessity will no more be wanting to his action. He will be holy even as God is holy; no longer liable to sin; free, and controllable by punishment or reward no more.

Reward and punishment may be regarded as serving to supply the defect of necessity in the being to which they are applied. They have evidently this tendency, though but imperfectly. They tend to insure that rightness of action which otherwise might be wanting. Technically speaking, freewill, and all that belongs to it, is a result of "negation." Man differs from God in not being free; or by absence of that which in the Divine nature makes holiness necessary. Whatever it be, that is not in man; and man's characteristic of possible doing either right or wrong evidently depends upon that absence, is wholly accounted for by it, and needs no other supposition. Surely God is truly the Free. He must be taken as

the type of freedom. In what respects we differ from Him, so far do we depart from the true perfectness of freedom. And in this especially we are unlike God, that it is possible to us to do wrong.

What makes a difficulty here is, that we do not feel as if our freewill, our arbitrary power of doing or not doing, depended on a defect. To us it seems a great capacity, the prerogative by possession of which we are exalted above all the world. But should it be so hard to us to understand that we put darkness for light, and light for darkness? We pride ourselves on arbitrariness, which God puts far away from Him, which freedom knows but as her direst foe. Our own words reprove us.

We labour under a confusion which has its source in the belief that the world is as it appears. We feel that we are free as compared with the inert things around us. This is true. These things are subject to an inert necessity; man feels himself not to be so. And he dares not acknowledge himself to be not free, for fear of reducing himself to the level of those things. But this perplexity is removed when it is remembered that *things* are but phenomena: that there is no inert necessity, nor can be; that it can only appear. In maintaining his freedom man denies his subjection to the phenomenal or inert necessity, to which he is conscious that he is not subject; but he overlooks his want of the true not-inert necessity. The inertness in that which man perceives, and the arbitrariness in himself, are correlative; two forms of the same negation or defect. Nature is free, man is not free,

therefore he feels himself arbitrary, and nature bound in fate. Nature's holiness to him is inertness.

With respect to the attempts which have been made to bring man's actions into one category with physical phenomena, and prove him subject to an inert necessity (whether metaphysical, by logical arguments, or inductive, by accumulation of statistics), one remark may suffice. Whatever the force or value of these proofs may be, they are evidently incomplete. The theory does not fulfil the conditions of a theory, for it does not account for the phenomena. It is true that consciousness is not authoritative, but it demands to be accounted for. This is a claim that cannot be foregone. Any theory of man's action, that can pretend to correctness, must show why our consciousness should be such as it is. If man be the subject of an inert necessity, as phenomena are, why does he feel as if he were not?

It accounts for all, and answers all demands, to recognize man's deadness and his presence in a living world. Life and freedom are one. What man recognizes in his feeling of freewill is a difference between himself and nature. He is not deceived in this; he errs only in interpreting his consciousness into proof of his freedom. By his deadness it is that nature is to him inert; that the necessity in it appears to exclude action. For truly, action and necessity are one. What man calls his freedom, that very thing is his bondage. His self-action is inaction. For what is sin but the absence of the true action of the man, when he is swayed by passion, led captive

passively? In sin there is action which is perverted and evil, because the MAN'S action is wanting in it. All nature's part was perfect, but there was a demand for human action, and it was wanting.* Is it not wonderful that piety compels us to take all evil action to ourselves, and to say of all good that it comes from God, that it is God's work in us and not our own? Those words are true. Only when God acts in him is man truly free.

That is true freedom in which the action is the Being's own, wholly determined from within. Such action is one and invariable, is necessary; the Being does not change, nor, therefore, the action. True freedom involves holiness. Action which is variable, which may be either right or wrong, is dependent upon circumstances; it is the inaction, not the true action of the Being. Action, freedom, necessity, holiness, all are one. Necessity and freedom are one in love. True life, or being, and love cannot be separated. It is not a mere figure of speech that God is Love.

Thus the idea of responsibility takes its right place. Doubtless man is responsible; in that way his want of life expresses itself. By absence of the life which constitutes the true necessity, arises that want of necessity which places under law, and gives rise to duty. Law is from the absence of love. When that which fulfils it is not present, then law is felt.

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* "I dare do all that may become a man;
Who dares do more is none."

There is then, and then only, that which is "due," because it is not rendered; that which is "owed," because not freely paid. The law is holy, just, and good, for it expresses love; but love in relation to the not-loving. It is not a condition of the perfect life; it is the form of love where the fact is not. It expresses not the relation in which the living stand to the living God, but a relation from which God redeems by giving life to the dead. Law is latent, as it were, in love, like an inscription in a fountain, to be read only when the stream is dry. Subjectness to law marks the difference between ourselves and nature: we dream of laws in nature; not law is there, but liberty or law fulfilled. We are under law, who boast of freedom and are slaves. For man and nature differ as does a dishonest from an honest man. Nature will certainly do the thing that ought to be; under whatever variety of form, through whatever changes, infallibly that one thing shall be: the form may change without limit, the fact never. But man may, or may not, do that which ought to be; he will do it if he likes. Nature wants no laws; the love that is her life necessitates her being, she cannot be other than she is.

It is delusion that finds freedom in our ability to sin; yet a necessary one. Man's freedom cannot be given up but with his life. Freedom belongs to man's life, and must be maintained by those who do not see his deadness. But the denial of man's freedom imperils nothing if that be recognized. To disprove man's freedom is to give the crowning proof that he

has not life. This is the work in which those have been engaged who have assailed the doctrine of free-will. They have been proving on behalf of Christianity the death of man; laying anew the foundation on which the Gospel is erected, which Christian men have razed with pious zeal.

Therefore have there been the strong arguments against man's freedom which we have so resented and deplored. Therefore have we been compelled to say that freewill was a mystery not to be submitted to examination. These things were to teach us to be wiser; to wean us from that strong delusion that man has life. For the argument against freewill, that seeks to establish in man an inert necessity, answers precisely to idealism; has the same strength of logic, the same weakness of conclusion, the same inevitable rejection by mankind. Each brings us to a result which does not account for the consciousness it undertakes to explain; but each also proves an error in our thought, and contributes its share to demonstrate that false feeling in man which makes evident his defect. As this life of man—life to that which is not the true reality—is not truly life; so is the freewill which is connected with it, the freedom relatively to these things, not true freedom. Man is relatively free, therefore responsible; absolutely not free, not free in respect to the eternal which truly is; therefore to be redeemed and introduced into liberty, made partaker of God's freedom as of His life.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE SELF.

We are such stuff as dreams are made of.

IF our self-action be not true action, what is our Self? of what are we conscious? We are conscious of defect; man's consciousness of self is the feeling of his want of being.

There is in this conception nothing abstruse, or remote from our ordinary modes of thought. It is as familiar to us to be conscious of defect as of the contrary. When we are conscious of cold, for example, we are conscious of defect of heat. There is a certain heat natural to the human body, defect of which we are conscious of as cold; or in many other respects we may have consciousness of defect; of weakness for example, or of the loss of a member, or a sense. So we might equally be conscious of defect of being—of want of the true being of man within us.

Man is defective. This we know. The perfection of man has never been maintained by any. Therefore, being conscious, man should be conscious of being defective; that is, conscious of a defect of being.

To be true, man's consciousness must contain this element. And can it be doubted that it is this element of his consciousness to which the name of Self has been assigned? Is it not an emptiness that we are conscious of within, and call it Self?* If it be asked, what then is conscious of self, if the self be defect? It may be answered: man is conscious of it. Man is conscious of defect of being. We constantly distinguish, in our language, between the man and the self. We say: I hate myself, despise myself. We are deeply conscious that the self is not the true manhood, though obscurely, not having distinctly made the question a subject of thought.

"There *is* the Self." True: even as there *is* a shadow. Why should we not as well be conscious of defect of being, as perceive defect of light? Only by experience and long inquiry does man arrive at the knowledge that a shadow is a negation, and understand that the effects produced by shadows are due only to want of light. He perceives shadows as things. Always the absence of anything is felt as an existence by us, while we do not recognize that of which it is the absence. Nay more, even to our instructed eyes a shadow will often appear to be the substantial portion of an object; and the important part which a mere negation may play in our experience, may be understood the better by a reference to

* The unconscious suggestions of language are very striking. We speak of "self-consciousness" familiarly, as a defect in a person's character.

the painter's art; for drawing is little more than a correct use of shadows.

We are conscious of our self as acting; we recognize actions of the self. Truly: but we also recognize the action of cold; yet we admit that cold is but absence of heat, that the "actions of cold" are the effects of a negation. Does not our experience teach us that the actions of the self are the effects of want of action in man? Is it not thus that self-will is slavery?

It should be remembered, however, that to affirm the self, of which man is now conscious, to be defect, is not to repudiate personality. Personality does not depend upon the self. There is in us an emptiness where there should be a fulness; the true personality of man lies in the bestowment on him of a truer life.*

Recognizing in the self, of which we are conscious, defect of being, a light diffuses itself over all our experience; the whole thought of man and of the world becomes transparent. There is a defect in us which we apply, as it were, to all things. In all things, as they are to us, our self has left its mark, defect is introduced, the being is banished. Remembering this, it is no longer a mystery that we have been so perplexed and baffled. So must we have arrived at a

* We may either say that the self, as such, is defect of being, or that the self we are conscious of is not the true, right self, which is "being." Whichever be preferred, the idea is the same: the argument refers to this self which is in us.

knowledge of the truth. To say that the things that are real to us are not the true realities, is but another way of saying that our self is not truly being. Thus too we see why, in our inquiry respecting nature, we must inquire also into ourselves. How should that which a defective being feels, fail to indicate his defect? Must it not differ by defect from that which IS?

If this self be defect of being, then must all true good, all life to man, be in self-sacrifice. In the utter destruction and casting out of this self, the doing away of the defect, man's life is given him; there can be no other true life for man. And when man truly sacrifices self, it is God's act in him. From the self comes no goodness, it must be made new. Self-righteousness is not righteousness; only when our self is filled, our emptiness destroyed, by God in us, then does man live and act. That is the true humanity. That also is man's true freedom. Sin, as the assertion of the self, is the bondage, the death of man.

Thinking of our self as "being," we are lost in darkness; but the right knowledge of our self enables us to reconcile almost all contradictions. We enter into the mystery of man's condition: that he is so glorious, yet so mean, so elevated, yet so ignoble, has such capacities, yet effects such unworthy results, is the one thing which seems to come short of its destiny. Humanity looks towards and demands a different being from this. There is demanded, in

respect to man, an existence that is not yet; his nature, his feelings, his consciousnness are attuned to a different being. He is conscious of defect; conscious of it, because it is to be supplied. For how should man be conscious of defect, except that he is to be delivered from it? What is it to be conscious of defect, but to have an aspect towards a truer being, a relation to a state of freedom from defect? So the true relations of sin are seen; it arises from the self, and exists for its destruction. For human experience is the destruction of the self, the doing away of the defect in man, the making him alive. Because it is being destroyed, the self runs into such excess, such madness. Driven by fiends, burnt up by torturing fire, it writhes and struggles in its death agony, grasping at every pleasure for short-lived relief, rushing into insane riotings, consuming itself with known and deliberate pangs, because ungovernable cravings gnaw its heart. Around it sweep the everlasting flames, the wrath of God filled up, and sparing not.* For in sober and literal truth this is hell. The self makes hell for itself, nor can escape, nor shall. "I will be thy plague, O! death; O! destruction, I will be thy destroyer." Sinning is hell, the burning up of the self with unquenchable fire. That cruel mystery of sin is this: should not death be destroyed, should not man be made alive? Let

* "And I saw another sign in heaven, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God."—Rev. xv. 1.

all miseries be incurred, let all vain remedies be tried, so shall God's remedy at last be found the only one.

For by life only can self be cast out, only by self-sacrifice, only through the love that is in knowing God. Thinking of that which we feel to be, as if it were that by which we must judge existence, we do not see that a change in man's BEING must be a spiritual change.. The want of life whereby he is in a world not spiritual must be done away. For well has it been observed, that our consciousness of self is that which determines our state of being, and gives the character to our perception. This self that we are conscious of makes the world inert to us. Our present self-consciousness demands, as its correlative and condition, an inert existence around us, which passively obeys our exertion, and is respondent to our force. Self-consciousness, involving the sense of exertion, is therefore inseparable from a feeling of passiveness in that on which we act.

In our conceptions of the future state, the same element is necessarily present. We cannot conceive of our*selves* except as in a world thus passive. However we may hold that world to be spiritual, though we may even say it is apart from matter, this characteristic of inertness cannot be separated from our thought. We give to that which is thus inert, indeed, emphatically the name of substance ; and are but too apt to fancy active powers inhering in such a substance, even when we think of spiritual being. This self of ours carries inertness inseparably with it;

where it is, inaction must be perceived. No stronger proof could be that it is the negation: put it wheresoever, surround it howsoever, a negation must be present to it. At least we may say this: inasmuch as the self that we are conscious of, by its own nature, involves the feeling of inertness, therefore our feeling the world to be inert can be no evidence that it is truly so.

From this necessity under which we lie of feeling inertness around us, evidently has arisen our conception of the universe as an inert existence on the one hand, peopled by active beings on the other: and these beings, also, we conceive to be such as we are; that is, to partake of those feelings which in us constitute, though unrecognized, the consciousness of defect.

Even God we have conceived as such a self. Scarcely can we prevent ourselves from attributing to Him intellect such as ours, exertion of force like that we feel, difficulties, contrivances, ideas. All this has been necessary from our taking our self as the standard of being; not reflecting that our mode of consciousness involves a consciousness of defect, and that, therefore, there must be a consciousness different from ours.

Thus the question of man's relation to God, how he can be distinct from the Divine Being, becomes free from the difficulties with which it has been felt to be encompassed. It no longer even appears to be a contradiction to say that God is infinite, and yet

deny that man is divine. Man is not divine, because his self is defect of Being. God is not in this humanity, not because He is limited, but emphatically because He is without limits. Of Him no darkness, no negation can be affirmed. The defect in man, our consciousness of a self which cannot be divine, has been truly the cause of our entertaining side by side in our minds the beliefs that God is Infinite, absolutely without limits, and yet that there is other EXISTENCE besides Him. The direct contradiction between these propositions is evident; and though it does not, therefore, follow that either ought to be abandoned before we know what to put in its place, yet it is at least clear that there must be a juster and more adequate way of regarding the subject, if it could be attained. If mere contradictions are sometimes necessary to us through our imperfection, yet they certainly cannot be in the things themselves. Does not the recognition of our self as defect of being, do away with the necessity of maintaining a contradiction in this case? Our self is emphatically not God, for it is not being. We had to reconcile the feeling that our self was not divine with the false opinion that our self was being; and this confused us, made us assert a BEING not divine, while yet we could not renounce God's infinitude. How much not only philosophy but religion has suffered from this paradox, those well know who have studied the history of human thought. But in recognizing what man's self is, the disturbing force is taken away, and our thoughts right themselves. No contradiction is here any more,

or is to be feared. For in asserting that man's self is not God, we do not contravene His infiniteness, but assert it. And the religious feelings are relieved almost as much as the intellectual sense, while the language of Scripture receives striking illustration. To be not divine is man's death: what he wants is to have Being in him, to be united to God and apart from him no more. And the Name, The I AM, The JEHOVAH, becomes full of a new meaning, a new glory. God is THE BEING. And not less do the words of the New Testament reveal their true force. Is not this its doctrine throughout that man's life is, to partake God's life. We need only to give up the persuasion that our self is Being, to see a new and awful meaning in the familiar words. Have we not warped the New Testament to our thought of man's life apart from God, while it affirms his death?

Man's death:—his self-defect of being; surely these are the same. In consciousness of this self surely man is made conscious of his death; conscious of death, because he is to be made alive.

And our thought of God also loses a great part of its difficulty. Ever the battle is renewed, on one hand or the other: Is God a Person? If not, He is nothing to us. We must have a Person for our God, or we are without hope in the world. But the difficulty in maintaining this lies in our taking our self as the standard of personality. God is not such as man: surely not; no such Self is in Him. Falsely we call ourselves PERSONS. We want personality.

Then first are we truly personal when God fills us with Himself. And God is not A Person ; one among many. God forbid : He is THE PERSON. Then are we personal when we are divine : when the overmastering Spirit dwells within us and ACTS, and we can say, "I labour, yet not I."

What dream is it from which we shrink, when we fear to be absorbed in God ? as if to be one with God were loss instead of gain ; as if our self were Being that we should fear to lose. To be divine is to be personal, to be in the true sense man. Least of all should a Christian man have feared to be made one with God, for what is shown us in Christ but the perfection of humanity in oneness with God ? If Christ be divine and yet human, why may not we be human and yet divine ? The notion of "absorption" bears self upon its face : we think of God as physical.

And if we say, how then can God *create*, if He be the only Being ? would it not become us rather to keep reverent silence, than to suppose that creation must conform to our conceptions ? Should we not rather learn what creation is from facts, than insist upon a creation answering our ideas ? Why should not creation depend upon the true infinitude and soleness of God's being ? If we admit creation inconceivable, can there be greater folly than to assert what its mode must be ? And yet again : If man have his true life only when God dwells and acts in him, may we not be well content to believe the same of all His creatures ?

The applying physical conceptions to the Divine Being is the secret of the difficulty that has been felt here. For in truth a just thought of the Creative Act seems not so impossible when we remember that God is Love. To our thought love must be self-sacrifice, because of the defect that we are conscious of. Love must be the sacrifice of that which is in us: where death is, life must be its destruction. In self-sacrifice, therefore, we must find the truest conception of creation. Love, sacrificing self: God limiting Himself as it were, giving up Himself for the creature's life; in this most truly may we present to ourselves creation. As Creator, not less than as Redeemer, is God revealed to us in Christ.*

In denying our self to be Being, the relations of things are left untouched. These things that "are to us," still are to us. This life of ours, such as it is, is not denied. When a shadow is pointed out to be a shadow, an absence and not an existence, nothing is changed except a false conception for a true one. A reference is made, in our thought and appreciation, to an existence before unnoticed or disregarded. To recognise a shadow is to know the light, to under-

* Theoretically, it seems simple to say that creation is by negation, not by addition. From infinite Being, by infinite variety of negation, infinite variety of being; that is of relative, or creature being. But such theoretical statements are of little value, except for the purpose of excluding worse ones. They should never be demanded, nor valued, even as approximations. The intellect can only deal with human conceptions, not with the very fact of being.

stand that there is more than was supposed, not less. How glorious that being must be, by defect of which is our life with all its beauty, joy, and good; its responsibilities, affections, and pursuits. Even this is not the very fact of life, it is life mingled with death; good enough if it be for us, it is not good enough for God. He who has Life in Himself cannot so be content for any of His creatures.

For our self-life is not true life, taken even at its best. Let us look into it and see. Is not our being such selves as we are, apart from any perversion or depravity, itself a deception and wrongness? For are we not thus compelled to feel things quite out of any proportion to their true proportionate value? A trifle directly affecting ourselves is felt as more by us, is more to us, than great interests which do not implicate our own welfare. Not because we are bad, but because we are "selves." We should be wanting in the essential properties of this state of humanity if we did not feel so. We have to struggle against the feeling; it seems as if we never could be freed from it. By the very nature of our self, we feel things not according to their true value. A less thing is more important to us than truly greater ones. We are not right to the universe. All things are distorted, twisted, turned from their true relations, so far as we are concerned, by the fact of our self-ship. Is there not a fact here which ought not to be ignored? Nay more; often we cannot but feel as good to ourselves the calamities and evils of other men. They are good to the self. And in wrong

doing, what is there but the natural result of this warping of our feelings by self? In doing wrong, a man evidently acts against the true value and relations of things, moved by his wrong feeling of them. He violates right to gratify self. Sin is treating things as they are to the self, not as they truly are. Virtue to us means self-denial; yet is virtue nothing but acting according to the truth of things; letting the most weighty have the greatest weight. And when we consider the meaning of the word virtue, that it is manhood, and reflect how it consists in opposing self, surely it should be clear to us that the self is not man's BEING.

Self is our great enemy; it deceives us. It makes us feel things to be good which are not good; evil which are not evil; great which are trivial. If therefore we should be disposed to say: the self of which I am conscious is my true being, or else I am deceived; let us reflect that by this very self we certainly *are* deceived, and made to feel things as they are not. To God all things must be as they truly are, all felt in right and just proportion. He cannot be a self as we are. He is love; our self is not love. He is light, our self is darkness.

And again, not understanding that by self a defect is introduced into our feeling, and the action and life of nature made wanting to us, we have been compelled to suppose the most incredible things respecting our perception; that we put so much into nature; that it is to us so much more than it is in

itself! Light is from mere motion affecting *our* eye, music from mere motion affecting *our* ear; all the value that nature has, it has through the mysterious virtues of our Self, which turns dead mechanical impulses into this various life! Our self a storehouse of all sweet and glorious and wondrous things, to which the universe ministers mere occasion, as it were, to be conscious of its riches! What could have brought men to such a thought? But it cannot be true. Not we are rich and nature poor; not so, but we turn out the life from that which is around us, and to our self there is no more the living fact of Being but inert forces, a mere dead mechanism, which leaves us utterly amazed to think how it can be so much to our perception and our hearts; how glorious we must be to make so much out of so little!

Let us protest one moment against ourselves. Let rational inquiry be heard against assurance. What cause does our experience of nature bespeak? What things should they be which thrill our souls with rapture, penetrate our hearts with sweet or solemn thoughts, speak with such mystic language, inwind themselves with our deepest feelings, and make themselves part of the very fountain of our life; which are beautiful, gentle, living, full of truth, of majesty, of joy or awe, of comfort or of warning; which are bound to us by infinite relations; which teach us solemn lessons, rousing our souls to ecstacy or anguish; which say to us, Be more, be better, join heart and hand with us?

Matter and dead forces? It cannot be. The

theory is self-condemned. It does not account for, nor touch, the most pregnant facts of the case. The question turns itself the other way. We must ask rather why we have been compelled to make such an inference; what that self of ours can be that has forced upon us such a thought?

For our experience let us be bold enough to affirm an adapted cause; a possible one. Let us not wantonly make mystery, and say: Nature *is* matter and force; but how it can affect us thus passes comprehension: make two mysteries indeed; first, that we should know, without a full and reasonable investigation, what nature is, and then that it should be so inconceivably unlike all that its effects and powers would indicate it to be. For there is no man who has not felt in his heart what a miserable failure our investigation of nature is; what poor and even ridiculous results we educe. The secret of its being palpably escapes us: the things we discover cannot be accepted as the facts. Imaginary ideas are invented without end to satisfy the necessity of finding, in nature, something that at least may seem to make its wonder less incredible. Whereas all that is needed is that we should bethink ourselves, that that which is felt to be by us, may be, nay must be, other than that which IS. Must be; for our self is in it; defect, negation, that which banishes its true being.

For that our self is defect of being is, perhaps, in no respect more manifest than in this; that to it the phenomenal is the real. Real to the SELF, unreal

to the MAN. Man feels and knows that to be unreal which yet is real to him. The discord of his life is here, in that defect which makes him such a self as he is. The defect, unrecognized to be defect, clothes all things with mystery; surrounds with ever multiplying doubts. The inert and transient world, which does but seem, is the reality to the self. Hereby we know the self: it is that to which the unreal is the real. When we are freed from that, the phenomenal shall be reality to us no more. Because no defect shall be any more in us, the eternal fact in which is no defect, shall be our reality—that spiritual fact of which our experience testifies so plainly, but which now we cannot find, which disappears when we seek it, because of the blindness in our eye. The life in time is a life of defect, of passion, of getting, from the pressure and torment of our want. The life of heaven, the life eternal, is the life of being, of action, of giving from the riches of our having. Slaves now, rendering a fearful and reluctant service for what we can obtain: Kings then, from royal bounty, of our own freedom, bestowing. No deadly self, coiled like a serpent in our breast, gnawing at our hearts; that we can see nothing, heed nothing, do nothing, but feed for ever its ravenous hunger. Not this self, the Tyrant, the Destroyer. Destroyed by the mightier Love, its pale and wounded victims shall arise, with freed hearts and holy hands, and join the universal life. No more isolated and apart, in self-pursuit, but wholly one with all, rejoicing beyond reach of sorrow, happy beyond touch of

harm, blest with God's own blessedness of absolute surrender.

Man is degraded, low, an outcast; open to the cruel shafts of sarcasm, his bleeding heart fair mark for jest and scoffing. Poor is his virtue; a fair pretence, pierced through by gaping wounds, betraying the rotten selfishness beneath. So let it be. Yet stay, O scorner, till the true man be seen. Crushed beneath his enemy, striving vainly with a foe that is himself, bearing death unknown within, and seeking helplessly the secret of his misery everywhere but there; speak not rash words of him. Let death have reverence. Rather, let Life that strives with death and overcomes, the kindling powers that shall know no quenching, the battling light and darkness, the war heaven with hell, receive the homage of an awful joy.

For He is party to the strife whose Presence is accomplished victory; whom nothing withstands, nothing delays: who hath abolished death, and with His own blood sealed man's deliverance. Life has been given for life, the law of life has been fulfilled. Christ has borne our death; has brought life into contact with our self and shown it vanquished: the power is there, the work shall surely be accomplished. For He triumphs even now; earth doth confess Him Lord. Suffering and sacrifice, shame and sorrow, by these He is known to be Divine. The weary ears of men listen, and drink in the tale, and own that it is true. Sorrow and sacrifice, God taking our death

upon Him, made to be sin for us, these bring salvation; they have a charm which cannot fail. The glad heart bounds to hear it; herein it reads the secret of its being; the mystery is opened; Heaven is revealed. Now it knows that the self-life is death; it knows God, and lives.

BOOK III.

OF ETHICS.

He trusted in God.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE FACT OF HUMAN LIFE.

As seeing that which is invisible.

THE views which have been suggested have an evident bearing on the regulation of our life. Our action should correspond to reality, and not to a false impression. If, therefore, man's feeling in respect to the world in which he is be erroneous, it is a necessary consequence that principles of action based on that feeling should mislead : if we are under illusion, only by escape from that illusion can we hope wisely to conduct our life. Nor is evidence wanting that man does need, for practical purposes, a truer knowledge than he has hitherto brought into exercise. Man fails in his dealings with the world. Not in respect to his action upon phenomena : of these, so far as he knows and obeys their laws, he proves himself the master. He can use the physical world for his purposes, but he fails to conform himself truly to the nature of things ; there is a want of accord between himself and nature, of which he bitterly rues the consequences. Evidently he goes wrong, incurs disappointment, runs into evil while seeking good.

Therefore, it were an unquestionable practical gain to recognise the illusion under which we have been in respect to the world, even if we could know no more. From innumerable mistakes it might save us of treating that as the true reality which is not; or of suffering ourselves to think of that as truly good or evil which we do but feel so. But this is not all. The illusion yields, not to uncertainty, but to a knowledge worthy of the name. The fact and meaning of human experience we know: it is the making man alive. Remembering this, the world stands before us all in light. From an evil state, the worst of states, of which alone it can be truly said that it is death, the state which constitutes him a self-seeker and is the cause of all sinful deeds, man is being raised: raised to a state of true and actual life, absolute and eternal; death being destroyed, so that he shall have to regard self no more.

The world is being redeemed: this is the fact of human life. Whatever our experience may be, that which causes it is the raising up of man from death. The evidence of this lies in the necessity which has been traced in it. Science, proving that all things are bound together by an inevitable chain, of which no link, even the minutest, might be wanting, gives demonstration that all which we experience is necessary for that which is the fact of the world's history; necessary for the carrying out of man's redemption. Christ has interpreted to us the Necessity of nature: has shown us the fact which is the one and universal Cause. For the cause of our experience is not that

inert existence we have conceived; the necessity by which all things are determined is not that dead necessity we have supposed. It is the necessity of love: the love of God which must redeem the world.

Let us say it with reverence: human experience is the making man alive. This is the fact on which to fix our eye; which, if we would be right to the world, we must regard; seeing which we see it as it truly is. We must remember that man is dead and must be made new; so new that he must be delivered wholly from himself. We are appalled at sin, and think: Can that work man's redemption? But it is even so: the evil is not in the sin, but in that which is the cause of sin. By sin our death is made conscious to ourselves, and man learns what he is. If there were no sin there were no less evil, man were not less dead; but the death could not be destroyed. There is no difficulty in seeing rightness and love in the existence of sin, while our loathing of it and feeling of guilt in it are increased, if we can see the evil of the state from which man is raised; that sinful deeds do but make manifest an evil which exists apart from them, and is their source: an evil which, without them, could not be done away. How evil must be that state of man which turns the love of God into occasions of iniquity; and which, even at the expense of the whole mass of human crime, God must destroy. For the end is worthy: worthy not only of the woe mankind have borne, the tears they have shed, but also of their crimes and guilt. Because that end is not happiness but holiness, the perfection of self-sacrifice, the only

good.* The evil is not that dead humanity should sin: that is a proof and triumph of Eternal Love; for therein man is redeemed.

Fixing our eye upon the fact of man's redemption, all things are made new to us. A glory almost too great to bear transfigures this poor life: passing all thought and all desire, passing all dreams and yet no dream, but plain and demonstrable truth. Not less can content the infinite heart of God, nor the Saviour's boundless love: His heart who gives us more than we can ask or think, His love who makes us one with Himself, and bowed His head to death that He might be the first born of many brethren. For the fact of all our pain, and sorrow, and distress, that for which all are necessary, is the making man alive. God gives to us to suffer for that end; Christ gives to us to be even as He was. He has made known the fact of human life; the Son of Man is revealed in Him. Every suffering, every loss, is borne for man's life, necessary to that end which could not be without them: necessary, not as conditions or as means, but as the very fact itself, the mode in which it is wrought out.

To believe is salvation: to believe in Christ the Redeemer of the world, that He saves MAN, and will subdue all to Himself: this saves us. It makes us know God; and to know Him is life. To know Him it is enough. It was ignorance, and blindness, and

* Happiness, except as one with self-sacrifice, cannot be said to be good. It is only felt as good, which is entirely different.

mistrust, that held us captive, and bound us in the chains of death. Because we knew Him not, nor His work, we grasped at pleasure, we fled from pain and sacrifice, we exalted our own will, and found our good in that which was pleasing to ourselves. To know God turns darkness into light, sorrow to gladness, evil and pain and wretchedness into unbounded joy: makes welcome to us every loss, ennobles all things trivial, gives to earth the blessedness of heaven. To the saddest, weariest hours comes a delight which makes all other pleasures poor. From the sorrow the rejoicing springs: we are suffering that man may live. Therein are we one with Christ, whom all hearts do pronounce Most Blessed, and fill up that which is behind of the sufferings He bore. We too are ready to be offered. Our hearts are taken captive utterly by love. The terrors that have haunted us, the evils we have shunned, were but dark shadows from the blackness in ourselves. We look abroad again, and the light of heaven glows unchequered over all. Our fears are gone. If there be no evil but that which love makes necessary, then there is no evil: if no pain but pain borne for man's life, then is pain utterly transformed. The one Love, that is in and through all things, by which all things are, the Love that is the only joy, smiles also through the tears of sorrow. Life stands confessed beneath the mask of death.

CHAPTER II.

OF ILLUSION.

THAT man is being raised from a dead state into life gives a solution of the otherwise insoluble problems of our experience. The light which this thought throws upon sin, showing it to be a necessary result of the death from which man has to be delivered (the evil of which it displays and brings to our consciousness, but cannot increase), is but one example of its bearing upon the mystery around us. Our perplexity arises from our inadequate apprehension of the fact that our present state of being is not the LIFE of man; from our not reflecting that a being in a wrong state must feel, as well as act, wrongly. Thus, for example, there has come confusion into our ideas respecting good and evil. For it is evident that the raising man from death to life is good, the only possible true good for him; and whatever things are included in, or necessary for, that end must be also perfectly good. But these things are felt as evil by us; to us they are evil, involving the loss of that which we value, the failure of that which we attempt,

the bearing of that which is painful. We feel as evil that which is good. It is evident that we do so, for we feel as evil that which God does: things which constitute part of the course of nature, and cannot be dissociated from His immediate agency. The fact, therefore, with which we have truly to deal is, that we feel as evil things that are not evil. We should ask: What is the matter with us that we feel God's act as evil? But instead of this, taking our feelings as expressing the truth, we have been asking: How can there BE so much evil? By our confidence in our own impressions, our whole thought has been perverted.

Why must we feel so much evil? is quite a different question from the other, How can so much evil be? and especially different in this, that it can be answered. We must feel evil because man is in a wrong state, and is to be made right. It is not an evil thing that man, being as he is, should feel evil. If his feeling were not of evil, the fact could not be good; for he does not feel things as they are. Nor can the amount of the evil felt by him, however absolute or enormous, affect the case. It does but prove more emphatically the wrongness of his feeling, and place in clearer light, thereby, the wrongness of his being. That cannot be the true humanity, by which things are felt as they are not; God's act felt as evil. The false feeling proves the wrongness of the state to which it belongs.

Evil pertains to the phenomenon. The feeling of evil is inseparable from the feeling of the phenomenal

as existing; it is inseparable, therefore, from the present state of man. Evil must be felt by us, until the defect of our being is done away: but this false feeling on our part need not mislead us: we need not act as if it were true. Even while our feeling continues erroneous, our belief and understanding may be right, and our action thereby be redeemed from misdirection. We can recognize the cause, in our own condition, which makes us feel as we do; we can fix our eye upon the fact, we can make our action true to that which IS. In all our feeling of evil we can think: I am feeling as evil that which is not so. We can make even our words conform to truth, and say of every misfortune, not "how evil this is," but, "how evil I feel this." Nay, we may go farther, knowing the fact of man's redemption. Even the feeling of evil, though it cannot be altered, may be swallowed up and lost, so absorbed into a larger happiness that its very character is changed. If through the feeling of evil man must be redeemed, how could we be willing not to bear our part? Is it evil that we should feel pain, should suffer loss, in order that man may live? Can we fail to find in that our truest blessedness? To regard the fact; to know the redemption of the world, and to fix our eye on that; this is the cure for sorrow. This is the gospel, the good tidings of great joy, which are to all people, flooding earth with a sea of gladness.

Christ shows us that the world is going right, not wrong as we suppose; that it *is* full of God's glory.

So He gives us happiness. For the sting of evil is that we think it truly evil; that we do not know that the fact is good, utterly and entirely good. If we will recognize the death of man, his need to be made alive, and the fact that he is being made alive, and that all human experience is necessary for that end, evil is no more evil. All this is the form in which man's redemption is presented to us, and we therein rejoice and will rejoice. What does it matter that it is painful to us, if the world therein be saved?

The mystery of evil is that we feel it, not that it is: and that is no mystery. Christ has taken it away, showing us the death of man that is, his life that shall be: showing us the meaning of all pain, and loss, and failure; that it is for the life of man. What we naturally seek and desire is to have the world as we should like it, conformed to our feelings of good and right; such as suits us in this present state. And we think it evil that it will not be so, and lament over the mystery of God's ways. But to have that which we naturally desire were to have man confirmed in death, to forego his redemption. He must be made different from that which he is; therefore, the world must be evil to him. Because it is too good for him, he feels it evil; because it is so truly, absolutely good. We would have it good to the self; but the only goodness is the destruction of the self. For which destruction, misery must be, and cruellest pains, and crushing of tenderest hope and love; nor only so, but rampant guilt, and wrong triumphant, and sacrifice of noblest aims. That

which were good enough for man's desires is not good enough for God. If there were not that which we feel as evil, that perfectly good fact which God wills could not be. In all afflictions we may say: it is very hard to bear, but the world is going right; shall I not bear this, if man be saved and this be necessary? If this cup may not pass away, shall I not drink it?

Is not Christ's death the joy and glory of the world, the best thing that ever happened? In it we may see the difference of the fact from the appearance. For from a human point of view what is the death of Christ but a black murder; deceit and violence crushing the hopefullest of lives? "We thought it had been He who should have restored the kingdom unto Istael." But more was to be done than that, more and better; a work for which not His life only, nor His agony, but lives unnumbered must be given, and agonies drawn out through every age. At all expense of woe, man must be made alive.

Thus we see, also, why man's present life must have been such a deception: why he feels that which is phenomenal as existing, finds the spiritual physical, and has been condemned all these ages to believe it so. To have been in error and deceived was right for him. This also is the fact of his redemption; for so he pursues unrealities, places his confidence in that which falsifies its promise, seeks rest where no rest can be found. So he fails, and learns his ignorance; so

he rushes into sin, and learns his vileness. So he is taught that in his very being he must be made new; must be delivered from himself, and be made living with an eternal life. The reason of man's perceiving as he does is, that this experience is necessary for the work of his redemption. He must have this consciousness, that thereby his state may be altered: he is under illusion, not that he may continue so, but that he may be delivered; that he may feel its evil, and escape its tyranny. "The creature is made subject to vanity," but it is in hope. We cannot be holden of its chains. For what bondage is so wretched as being ruled and driven by an illusion; spell-bound beneath the power of a phantom world? To know that we have been so deluded is itself deliverance. Once convinced that the eternal is the only true existence, our slavery is at an end. Man wakes from his troubled dream to see the glory of eternal day around him; braces himself to waking life, and looks back, with mingled gladness and surprise, upon the dim chimeras which his unnatural slumber had invested with a brief reality, a transient power to make him glad or sorry, hopeful or afraid.

CHAPTER III.

OF REALITY.

THE error of our feeling is that phenomena are as the fact to us; the error of our practice is that we treat them as the facts. We do not see the worth of temporal events. Overlooking their relation to the fact of man's redemption, we overlook all that is absolute in them, all that constitutes their value and necessity. If in all things we regard the fact, letting our thoughts go on beyond our own impressions to that which truly is, then we can treat all things aright. For the world's redemption is a fact which, by its nature, surpasses and subordinates in our regard all others. In its presence, illusions lose their power; new forces influence us; the world is not to us what it was before, but infinitely more. Our whole being is enlarged. A new and overpowering thought absorbs the private regard. It cannot give us any more to suffer, or to forego our own desires. A joy so great springs out of the suffering, in our knowledge of that for which it is, that suffering itself is changed. Knowledge of man's redemption, which shows all suffering to be suffering

for the world, makes a new thing of human life; inverts it; more than doubles it; extracts from that part of it (how lage a part!) which we have deemed mere loss and evil, a value infinitely exceeding all the rest; makes suffering more to be desired than that to which we have heretofore abused the name of joy. For in suffering we are one with Christ.

We have not seen the truth of human life, we have overlooked the very fact of that which it is; what wonder, then, that it has been found a gloomy mystery? For that men have found it so cannot be denied. It stands written in imperishable records. Literature is man's thought of life, wherein he gives verdict that it is inscrutable and dark. And it is so utterly unless man be in a state which makes all the evil that attends his course necessary for his deliverance; unless we can turn the clouds that are around his path to brightness, recognising their true secret; and understand that this Being, so surrounded and penetrated by evil, is not the true Man; this monstrous course of crimes and errors not man's life, but the making him alive. The evil cannot be denied: it is too foul, too loathsome. The universal conscience of mankind rises up to rebuke him who would make light of it. To interpret human life we must learn some unknown fact, which shall bring evil into a new light. This unknown fact is supplied by the perception of man's death. This takes away all evil; or leaves it, rather, but as the manifestation of infinite and boundless love, the perfect Good. Our thought that things are as we feel alone prevents our knowing,

and compels us to unite evil with our thought of God.

We cannot be happy, nor content (it were inhuman to be so), while we think that there is truly evil, that the world is going, even in part, to an evil end. And we cannot, without closing our eyes to facts, think otherwise, unless we can recognise something more in human life than it appears to us ; a reference to some other end than those which we have recognized in it. For in respect to those ends it is a failure palpable and manifest. Neither man's enjoyment, nor his virtue, is secured. But to know man's need of redemption from a state of death, and to understand the fact of it, makes all things right ; gives us a source of happiness perfect and unassailable, a spring of energy which nothing can damp. Be the phenomenon what it may, of misery or wrong, our eye is fixed upon the deep underlying fact : in this, too, man is being delivered from himself, being raised from self-seeking to self-sacrifice. Nothing could be spared, nothing could be otherwise. Man, being as he is, must so be made alive. Nothing is evil in that which is. In the saving of man from self-dominion, from wrong-feeling and the possibility of sin, there is no evil ; none in the fact on which God looks, and all look who truly see ; all who see aright the state in which man is, and the necessity that he be saved from it.

Seeing thus in all things the fact of man's redemption, the world is made a new and different world to us. The things which make us do evil lose their

power; we no more covet, are no more afraid. Our action becomes right to nature; conformed to the truth of things; it cannot end in disappointment therefore; cannot fail. For we feel truly. In all things we look at man's redemption, and when it comes that we are made to suffer and to lose, and our desires are set at nought and frustrated, then glows our heart with a joy unparalleled, too great for words, filling our faith and love to the uttermost, making us know what heaven is, and what the joy God chooses for himself, the eternal joy, wherewith the infinite fulness of His bosom throbs, whereby he is the BLESSED God: His own joy, but a joy he keeps not to Himself, but gives to us also, too unworthy; the joy of sacrifice for man's redemption. Passing belief, and yet not passing; the humblest faith must stretch her hands even to that height of glory, and human love expand its puny measure to become the heir of God. Of God revealed in Christ, made manifest in Him so that we know Him, truly actually know him, and see Him as He is. He IS the Sacrificer, joining us with Himself therein: that is to know God: it is to be one with Christ the Saviour. We can believe it, for though it is we receive the too great blessedness, it is God who gives: who is the Giver, whose happiness is in giving, all whose gifts surpass our thoughts and fill us with an infinite surprise.

Oh weary and woe-stricken world, oh vainly striving men, your misery is that you do not know; that you see not that which IS:—Why you are sacrificed, why you are wretched, by what NECESSITY such

cruel pains assault you, such bitter lacerations of the dearest ties. A sevenfold mystery besets you round, and tears as of blood drop from your darkened eyes. Behold and see! The Man who has gathered up all sorrow, and deprived it of its sting; the pattern of all mourners; the revealer of the Father. Giving His life for the world, He stands, the head and crown of humanity, which drinks in life from Him, and grows into His image. We, too, are made conformable to His death, drink of His cup, with His baptism are baptized. For if in our agony the world is saved, ours shall be a willing agony like his.

There is no true consolation for sorrow but in knowing man redeemed; in knowing that the world is going right. That is, in fixing our regard upon a good so great that it makes all evil good, and satisfies us for the loss and overthrow of our best desires and hopes. Placing our happiness not in having what we like, in obtaining what we should choose, but in the goodness of the FACT, the only rightful ground of happiness, we have obtained a perfect consolation in all ill. Revealing the perfectly good fact, the redemption of man from being such as he is, Christ gives peace: a comfort not infected with the bane of self-regard. For only by knowing and believing this, can we escape that worst of wretchedness. If man be not going right, if all be not well for him in spite of seeming, what is left us to rejoice in but the thought that we are or shall be happy, though others be not so? which rejoicing is the greatest of all curses, the

very depth of death. All that is in us, not utterly corrupt, abhors that most of all. Therefore do some men deny man's sin, or represent it as a trifling thing, repudiating God's just anger and the inevitable punishment. They crush the voice of conscience, because they cannot be content that Man should not be saved; because they will not place their happiness in their own unparticipated good. Therefore do others say: our happiness will be in God's glory and perfect justice, irrespective of the doom of those who reap the just reward of guilt; crushing the human instincts in their breast by the overpowering force of conscience. For what man could be happy in his brother's execution, because justice is fulfilled and the honour of the law, God's law though it be, maintained? If this be man's life, and therewith his probation, the conscience and the heart are hopelessly at variance. But see the reconcilement of this strife in the recognition of man's death and his deliverance. Man's redemption from a state in which he wants that which constitutes his Life, known as the history of the world, fulfils all the demands of our nature, justifies all our convictions, satisfies all our aspirations: accounts for all that is within us, all that is around; displays the dark and tangled labyrinth in clear and glorious light.

For even such a deliverance we need: to be saved wholly from ourselves. When we look into our hearts, how mean and unworthy is even that which is best in us, how utterly marred and spoilt. A self-regard lurks in it all, which we would fain hide even from our own eye. And in this we feel it most, that when we

have done the best deed, and most have given up ourselves, then the hateful thing will come again, and we think: Now I have done well; then I was truly good. "Who shall deliver us from the body of this death?"

Christ shall deliver us, by the Fact he shows us, the God He makes us know. By showing us what Life is and what Death, and what all things are, making the world so different, He shall drive that demon wholly from our hearts, and God himself shall dwell therein. He shall save us utterly from self-regard, swallowing it up in an absolute and boundless joy in that which IS. A joy in God, perfect and complete, a delight so full in the eternal good that no self concern can have any place: self-sacrifice so perfect that it is no more a sacrifice.

For his true salvation, man needs to be delivered from himself, from the necessity of making his own gratification his chief object. The problem of humanity is to make love the spring of human actions. It is apparently a hopeless task: experience seems to forbid the expectation, reason will not sanction it, calm investigation of what man is shatters the fond dream. It seems man's nature to act from interest and from passion; as if it were impossible to do more than wisely to direct his regard to his own welfare, that he may prefer that which is most to be valued, and subordinate the passing and inferior to the superior and endless. But this is the question whether the dead can live. If the true fact be known, it may be answered the other way. Believing man's

redemption, and knowing what the world truly is, love must take the place of self regard. It asserts its rightful power; its lost dominion is restored. With that alteration of our thought, our life too is altered; we cannot be as we were before. The whole scope of our regard, affection, and desire is new. We are taken out of ourselves by a Power above ourselves and understand what that saying means: "That which is impossible with man is possible with God." We want no more, because we have. There is nothing for us to desire, except to be made free from the remaining death: no other blessedness, no other glory than this we have, of being one with Christ: only that we might be fully one with him.

And the glory of this life embraces not only the great events which rouse enthusiasm, and kindle energy in all; it extends to the mean and ordinary incidents in which we are so weak. There is no great or small where all alike is necessary. Nothing is so trivial that in it the eternal fact is not; nothing so mere an accident that it must not have been for man's redemption.

CHAPTER IV.

OF WRONGNESS.

Either make the tree good and his fruit good, or else the tree corrupt and his fruit corrupt.

Let none admire
That riches grow in hell, that soil may best
Reserve the precious bane.—*Paradise Lost.*

USING the world as we naturally do, we can attain certain ends and achieve much that we feel desirable. Yet an incurable fatality seems to attend our actions. Permanent satisfaction fails us. The results will not answer to our hopes, and a mysterious necessity of evil seems to be in the world, that leaves the most sanguine, at last, hopeless of a remedy. This experience is too familiar, and has been described too often, to need any more to be insisted on. But there is an advantage in understanding it, and in seeing that it is no mystery, but a natural and necessary thing. It is the inevitable effect of error. Whoever attempts any work under a false conception, meets with the same experience as men find in dealing with the world as if it

were what it seems to them. Under a misapprehension of the true nature of that with which he has to do, a man places certain objects before himself which he feels convinced will ensure what he desires; he uses means in pursuit of these objects with ardour and satisfaction; he rejoices in them, he is assured he will succeed, he seems to himself to have all that he needed for success:—but the end is failure. He is astonished, perplexed, angry; he feels sure there has been some accident, perhaps some precaution omitted, he repeats his efforts. All the old enthusiasm is rekindled for a time; there is the same ardour and satisfaction in the work, followed by the same disappointment and recoil. It must be so: his energies are misdirected. He is acting under a false conception, according to appearance, not according to the truth.

Just in such case are we. In dealing with the world as we naturally do, we are treating it according to its appearance, and not according to the truth. We are acting under a false conception. We have enthusiasm and pleasure, a certain satisfaction in our pursuits, and a firm expectation of success:—But what is the result?

For true success there must be right knowledge. We are not acting according to the truth of things.

Again: Not only does error necessarily lead to failure but in this very failure is the remedy for the error. We learn by failing. Starting from a state of ignorance we necessarily act upon false conceptions before we obtain true ones, and are delivered from our ignorance only through the evils which it brings upon

us. All human history tells the same tale: of wisdom learnt through error; defects remedied through loss. Save by passing through mistakes and failures, which make him feel himself wrong, in apprehension or in feeling, there is not true good for man. They are necessary, therefore, and good in their evil. Their goodness is in their felt evilness. Man's errors are rightly wrong: their wrongness is their rightness. They are wrong for the results he aims at; right for their true result, of making him wiser, and curing his defects.

Even so is man in his relation to the eternal. His defect is made conscious to him by its results; he learns through error. By his failure he is forced to recognize his misapprehension, and to know that the world which he treats as physical will not be so treated unavenged. Truly the world is wrong; but it is rightly wrong. Therein the true ends which it subserves for man are perfectly fulfilled; though not the ends which he proposes. The phenomenon is wrong, but the wrongness of the phenomenon is the rightness of the fact. The wrongness and evil are the removal of man's deadness; even as his errors respecting material things are the removal of his ignorance.

The work of raising man into true manhood we feel as evil: it is evil to the self. But so it ought to be. The work of making man alive is a larger good than our capacity can grasp: it includes ourselves, involves our being made different from that which we are. Therefore to us it must involve the feeling of

evil. That is no more than that a child should find the arrangements of its home bring with them that which it feels as evil ; that being often felt by it most evil upon which its welfare most depends.

Where there is a self, such as that of which we are conscious, there the feeling of evil, or at least the liability to it, must be. The self carries the consciousness of evil with it. We cannot conceive self apart from the wish to avoid and to get. Above all, there must be the feeling of evil where there is the self, or how could there be self-sacrifice? And how could self-sacrifice be foregone; the one joy and beauty and delight that does not mock the name; the one thing that redeems the earth and makes it worthy of its place in heaven? How can there be self and self-sacrifice be impossible, until Satan has triumphed over God? Yet this must be if we separate from self the feeling of evil. If nothing painful were to be encountered, nothing to be sacrificed, how could there be at once self and love?*

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* Love necessarily involves that which is evil to the self. Love is in sacrifice. But where love is, there the evil to the self is no more felt as evil ; sacrifice is joy. This is what man wants to put him in heaven ; perfect love, that the evil to the self may be converted into joy. He wants LIFE that he may be in the eternal world ; he wants the self destroyed. For is it not strange to think what lurks in our thought of heaven? This self shall be in us still, but there shall be no possibility of self-sacrifice : there shall be nothing to be suffered. This is why the devoutest men can hardly find food for enthusiasm in the thought of heaven. They ought not. That heaven is not so good as earth ; where with all our shortcomings we can still sacrifice ourselves ; can still endure for love.

But the question will naturally arise: if we are to think thus of the things which constitute the realities of this earthly life, will not this lead us to their neglect? Why should we attend to our business, why seek to advance the comfort or maintain the order of life, if the goodness of the world be in its evil? A little reflection will show that a regard to the fact, instead of the appearance, would be as advantageous for the comfort and progress of the earthly life as for higher objects. For, whence come the disorders and evils of that life but from self-seeking, and from too intense an eagerness to possess that which is pleasant? How could evil result from substituting love and duty as the prompters to activity, instead of ambition and desire? That were surely an excess of caution, which should dread the effects of too great a subordination of the self-regard to joy in the work of God. 'What evil so afflicts us now [as it seems to some above all other ages] as the frantic desperation of men to do well for themselves? Or in what have the moralists and wisest men of all ages so agreed, as in testifying to the want of something which should moderate the violence of the passions? Do we uot, also, well know that incomparably less toil, freed from the perverting power of selfishness, would ensure a far more rapid progress than is ever likely to arise from the conflict of private interests?

Is not virtue the true wisdom? Does not the truest worldly success attend it in the end? Do not crooked courses lead to loss and ruin? Yet what is virtue, but the treating these things as of no value in

themselves, scorning them, casting them utterly aside, as merest trifles, in obedience to the fact which speaks in duty? The glory of virtue and nobleness is that they treat the phenomena as phenomena: they are true to the nature of things: they are success. And all meanness, vice, and hatefulness, what are they, but the treating these things that we like and fear with an undue regard, as if they were the realities?

Or again: There are two agencies which prompt us to action, our desires and our conscience: the stimulus of pursuing that which we enjoy, or escaping that which we feel painful, on the one hand, and the sense of right upon the other. Let it be conceived that the former of these were done entirely away, that we were made absolutely indifferent to pain or pleasure, what then would regulate our actions? Clearly the conscience. The sense of right alone would regulate our conduct. Would the world be worse or better, if men were moved to action only by the conscience?

But in truth, this doctrine of the world, so far from diverting attention from the practical matters of our daily life, is of all doctrines the most practical. It exalts these things to their true dignity, raises them from a false and most fatal depreciation. It affirms for them a value not less, but infinitely greater, than that which is assigned to them; but it regards the fact, and not the seeming. These things are not merely the trivial things which we suppose; they are the mode in which the eternal presents itself to us. We slight them and do them wrong, give them not

half the heed which they demand. These are the very facts with which our concern lies—our sole concern; the fact of these daily, ordinary duties. The present is the Eternal. Vainly do we fancy to ourselves an eternal in the future; the eternal is now, or it is never. The spiritual world and the material come not in succession even to us; they co-exist; they are fact and phenomenon. The material is the appearance of the spiritual. Why we misuse the world so much, is that we estimate it too low. We do not see enough in it, therefore we so abuse it. More rash and reckless far than he who should use gold for brass, we squander Heaven's own wealth as if 'twere merely gold.

There is a fatal practical defect in the belief that the physical is one FACT and the spiritual another, which may go far to account for the apparently incurable errors of our lives. Disjoining thus the one existence we can rightly apprehend neither world, the apparent nor the true, still less rightly act by them. Either we regard the present as merely physical, or, if we seek to regard the spiritual, it is as another different world, drawing our thoughts away from that which is now around us, and mostly, as pertaining to the future. So we vibrate between a worldly regard to this world, and a spiritual disregard to it; with what results we see. There is a strife between our religious and our earthly life. But the true regard to the world is a spiritual regard to it; a regard to the fact. Not two things, but one, are the religious and the earthly life: the one the fact, the other the form; answering to the true relation of the

eternal and the temporal. So grows our life into one harmonious whole; the living fountain within springing up and filling the else empty cisterns of this life of forms. Not foreign to our piety nor deadening it, but its very life and being, are the tasks of our earthly course, the routine of our daily work. Seeing these as they are, regarding the fact of them in man's redemption, they separate us not from God, but draw us to him; they bind us to Christ, whose life and death alone enable us to understand them, fill them with all their meaning, make them to be that which they are to us. To us to live is Christ.

But, as we naturally think of the world, not only do our passions and our self-seeking pervert our actions and draw us aside from right; even our best impulses and desires lead us astray. Nothing has been more productive of mischief than ill-directed zeal for good. We snatch prematurely at results, impatient of error and delay; and so we mar the working of beneficent laws, and fall into errors which can be redeemed only through the most terrible convulsions. This comes from our want of faith, from not seeing that God is glorified, and that His glory can suffer no diminution. On us it can depend, only, whether God shall be glorified in our willing action. Not by securing certain results rather than others, but by simple right doing in spite of all consequences, alone, can we subserve His glory. He does reign, and His kingdom ruleth over all. The perfectness of Eternal Love is here and now. No care of ours can take that which we feel as evil out of the world, nor ought to do so.

Man's salvation is in it. Thus seeing, we can keep our action straight, level to the true line of uprightness, and are delivered from the evils which flow from attempting to do good unrighteously. For we leave off acting for results. Results belong to God. We know not what is good, even in the narrowest sense of securing our own greatest pleasure ; much less what is good for man. For the true goodness of this world is neither enjoyment, nor virtue, nor any other thing that we call good, but that which IS ; man being made alive from death, and raised to a new BEING.

BOOK IV.

DIALOGUES.

HYLAS.—You set out upon the same principles that Academics, Cartesians, and the like sects usually do ; and for a long time it looked as if you were advancing their philosophical scepticism ; but in the end your conclusions are directly opposite to theirs.

PHILONOUS.—You see the water of yonder fountain, how it is forced upwards to a certain height ; at which it breaks and falls back into the basin from whence it rose : its ascent as well as descent proceeding from the same uniform law or principle of gravitation. Just so, the same principles which at first view lead to scepticism, pursued to a certain point, bring men back to common sense.

The following Dialogues are expository, not controversial. They do not profess to answer all objections to the views that have been proposed, but are designed rather to exhibit them in relation with a wider circle of thought. The reader will perceive that he is unceremoniously, simply for the author's convenience, converted to his views.

DIALOGUE I.

READER AND WRITER,—

R. IF I have understood you rightly, what you say rests upon this principle: That the defective state of man causes our feeling not to correspond with the truth of things; so that we can only understand aright either ourselves or the world by remembering that man is wanting in life.

W. It is so. I say that all defect, perceived as absolutely existing apart from us, proves itself by its very nature to be due to man's own condition; implies defect in relation to him.

R. Your position, I grant, is a reasonable one to consider; but there remain many grave objections. I will not mention the strangeness of the idea, and the alteration it demands in our way of thinking. That may be due only to its novelty. It may be as natural to conceive of defect within us as without us—of ourselves as being conscious of defect, as to conceive the opposite—when once we are familiar with the thought. It would be unfair to press you with that as an argument, which may rest only upon custom.

But let me mention, first, an objection which should weigh much with every reasonable man. Do you not put yourself in opposition to the universal opinions of mankind, and give direct contradiction to sentiments which have all the authority that human conviction can bestow? And this, not on some few points in which we might expect that error should be detected, but in relation to the entire scope of human thought. Is it not most unlikely that you are right?

W. If the case were as you have stated, I should agree with you. I should think any deductions which one man might make, however supported by argument, to be of little value, if they were in opposition to the real convictions of mankind. Understand me better. All my confidence is placed on the very ground on which you would have it rest. If I have not uttered the true convictions of man, and have not on my side the affirmations of all who are most worthy to be believed, I would wish everything unsaid. I am a learner, not a teacher. All that may seem new I have learned from the living lips of men, or from pages on which man's life throbs inextinguishably. I have not said one thing that you may not find better said before, or gather, fresh with the dew of simplicity, from the way-side as you walk. Mine has been an humble task: to listen to what men say, and let it sink into my heart, and repeat it to themselves: the child's part, who may sometimes see what his elders overlook, because of his conscious ignorance. For men, sometimes, in their great progress, seeing so many things, have not time to attend to all, and may suffer

old ideas to remain in their minds, without observing that they are incompatible with their better knowledge. Listening to the large discourse of humanity, with an humble heart and willing to be taught, as became one so little worthy to do more than the scholar's part, I have heard it affirm all the things that I have said. I have heard and believed, for they seemed to me true; and I could not help seeing that they formed a consistent whole, and that men need not contradict one another any more. For who does not, in his heart, affirm nature to be living and active; when has it been otherwise spoken of by man, speaking his true thought? And in what age of the world has not a deadness been recognized in man? who is not conscious of the sad truth in his very soul? But that there is a deadness in man and that nature is not dead, is all that I have said. It is not I that say it, but man. These two truths had not been brought into relation. For if there is a deadness in ourselves, how could we but perceive a deadness in nature, and become conscious of it, to our wonder and distress, when science taught us to observe? And who does not say that we are in the eternal world; that God and all spiritual being, if there be any such, is here and now present; and that these things are only hidden from us by our inability to see? the present state of man making them to be to us as if they were not. I bow to the assertion: it is true. We are in the eternal world; the very actual world in which we are, that is the eternal. And when I hear the men of science say that all the things which sense

and thought present to us are but phenomena, and that the very fact of being is unknown, how can I help recognizing here that which I have assented to before? These things must be but phenomena, for they are not the eternal, they are not that world in whice we ARE, they are the world in which we seem, and feel ourselves, to be. And when, again, I hear it said that these phenomena are the realities of our life, the only things with which we have to do; when it is affirmed that these things, which are not the very fact of being, are the facts to us; how can I help recalling what I had been taught before, that there was a deadness in man? how could I help seeing that a life in that which is not the very fact of being is not the very fact of life?

And I have read no book to which man has confirmed the meed of immortality, I have conversed with no pure and truthful heart, that did not affirm to me the unreality of earthly things; that these things, which are real to me, strictly are not, but are shows and forms, which to trust is to be deceived. How could I help seeing that I needed to be more; that the things which are but shows might be but shows to me, the things that are truly real be the realities? How could I not perceive that things ought to be known and felt by me as they are, and not as they are not? And when I heard almost all men affirm another being for man, in which these things should be to him no more as they are now, but he should be in the eternal world; how could I fail to see in that a deliverance from the deadness, a life to that which IS,

phenomena being no more realities? "Accuse me not of arrogance." How could I believe the true things that men say, if I believed not as I do.

R. You would imply, that in these things the true utterances of man are found, and that the statements which are inconsistent with these are only inconsistencies, not contradictions.

W. Even so. The apparent contradictions are seen not to be truly such, when the hurry and excitement of our life subside, and we have time quietly to look into our thoughts, and see what we really know. For men truly know much more than they are aware of, if they would only bring the knowledge which lies scattered in isolated portions into its right relations. Opinions which seem opposed often need only to be regarded in connection, to give to each other mutual explanation and support.

R. For instance, that the world is physical, or consists of inert matter, may mean only that it is so to our feeling or consciousness? We perceive it so, and have been obliged to draw corresponding inferences; which is an essential part of your representation?

W. Yes. But one chief test of an opinion is that it should embrace, and draw into itself, all the opposing views, and show each one to have been necessary in its place and order; so presenting the history of human thought as a true living development. What, for instance, so confirms the Copernican interpretation of the heavens, as its explaining the order of men's thoughts respecting astronomy?

R. I grant that if, by a condition affecting man, our perception of the world is modified, and caused to be of an inert instead of an active existence, men must have constructed science as it is, and ought to find such an interpretation of it as you suggest. If the absolute being in nature be spiritual, and man be defective, doubtless investigation ought to make him aware of those facts by such a process as you say. But this brings me to another remark, which is not so much an objection to the truth of your idea, as to its value. What claim to certainty can any such speculations possess? Innumerable solutions of these problems have been put forth, each one announcing itself as successful, but all, as you necessarily imply, erroneous. Why should this have any better fate than its predecessors? Is not the prudent caution, with which all such attempts are now regarded rather as interesting amusements than as serious work, justified, and as much so in your case as in others?

W. Far be it from me to attempt to exalt myself by a depreciation of others; any speculations of mine are of no more value than the idlest of the past. Nor do I enter into any competition with those men of gigantic ability, who have reared speculation to a height which has demonstrated to all future time at once her power and her incapacity. If I claim for my work a more permanent value, it is precisely because it is of so much humbler pretensions I present to you no speculation, no attempt to erect man's intellect into a judge of the universe. I present to you, indeed, nothing of my own. But this I say:

that man is the INTERPRETER of nature as well as her servant, and that by science he *has* interpreted her. It would be a false modesty which should prevent my insisting on the value of the work that MAN has done. What part have I in it that I should pretend it to be less than it is? I say, that science demonstrates that the perceived inertness is due to man: demonstrates it as certainly, more certainly (if demonstration admitted of degrees), as that the motion perceived in the heavens is the earth's. If any man will say that there *exists* an absolute negation, I will allow that, to him, I cannot prove my fundamental position, and consent that the doubt shall remain; but even then I will not admit it more doubtful than all things else must be *to him.*

R. By science, you would say, the conditions of the problem are altered, and that which was impossible made possible. If the inertness must be ascribed to man, the statement that he has not truly life is but another mode of expressing the same thing. You would make the entire position a question of science, not of speculation?

W. That is what I would do. I only ask the question, science answers it. Thus would be attained that certainty and demonstrativeness in philosophy, which has been so earnestly sought, and latterly pronounced so hopeless. All men agree in scientific truth, bowing to evidence not to be questioned. Why should not all men agree that the perceived inertness is man's? It is a question of science. It cannot remain in doubt; it must be decided one way or the other.

R. That question certainly alters somewhat the scope of philosophic inquiry. If the inertness be demonstrably due to man, something at least is done; but can this be *demonstrated?* is it not only an opinion still, although we may grant that the opposite may be reduced to a verbal contradiction?

W. I have tried to give demonstration of it; but the question must rest with each man's thoughts. I would rather ask than answer it. I cannot doubt what any man will reply, who will ask himself: I cannot expect or wish that any man should suffer me to make reply for him. Try yourself to conceive the case; the inaction of nature, as it is to us, is *absolute:*—that it acts as it is acted upon is the very proof of its absolute inaction. But surely absolute inaction must distinguish that which is not from that which is: phenomenon from fact. Nature cannot at once BE, and be absolutely inactive.

R. Of course nature acts, in some sense; no one will dispute that. But may not nature act physically, and so *be* physically, and yet be inert in the other sense of not originating action? The earth *e.g.* acts in the sense of attracting.

W. Being and acting cannot be dissevered, even in seeming. To be physical and to act physically are the same; but the being physical is itself being inert, or not acting. You have here noticed a result of our endeavour to maintain *inert existence.* We are compelled at once to assert action, and to deny it. The phenomenon must act phenomenally, or appear to act, or else it could not appear to be. So a phenomenon

which is felt as reality must impress us as if acting, and yet, when it is examined, be found to be inert. Thus it is discovered not to be the reality we feel it. Our perception of this passive action demonstrates an existence not passive. It is curious to see how a little difference in words enables us to overlook an inconsistency in thought. We could not say the earth acts, and yet does not act; but we can say, the earth is inert and yet acts. [Is not this a penalty we pay for the advantage of using words of diverse origin?] Physical things are felt by us as acting, but do not truly act.

R. Do not you forget that the inertness of matter is denied by many eminent men: M. Comte, for example, and Mr. J. S. Mill?

W. By no means. I agree with them entirely that the existence which acts upon us is not inert, I claim them, indeed, as authorities for that position. But I find their statement incomplete. They do not sufficiently observe that this existence, which they truly say is not inert, is felt as inert by us. That fact they do not account for. It is the turning point of the whole. Why is the not-inert inert to us? Is not the question as simple as this: Why is the not-moving moving to us? or, why is the earth, which is not at rest, at rest to us? Further, I think it is a mistake to speak of that which is thus affirmed to be not-inert under the name of matter. It confuses language. Matter means, if anything, surely that which *is* inert; the phenomenon or that which we feel to be. Surely those writers would not assert that a *phenomenon*

ACTS; still less that the phenomenon is not material. In brief, I find nothing so simple as that nature, though it cannot *be* inert, should be inert to us, because the very essence of it is unperceived. A phenomenon is inert of course. It is the same thing to say that man knows only phenomena, and to say that he introduces inertness into nature.

R. When put in this abstract form, the argument seems more powerful in words than in fact. It must be granted that inertness is inaction, that inaction is a negation, that a negation cannot exist. Also when you point out that the negation which we feel in nature is absolute, I must admit that it cannot truly be as we feel it; for absolute inaction is absolute not-being. But all this rather makes out a case for inquiry than establishes anything. There is more interest in the moral argument, for I perceive it is a question of practical life.

W. I am glad you feel it to be so. We must give the proposition its scientific, demonstrative basis, and so connect it with inertia and phenomena and such unfamiliar terms. Positions which lay claim to scientific proof (which has never been held a disadvantage) must in part be treated so. But the sooner that ground can be left the better; nor need it; indeed, be tarried on; for the very same argument, which thus appeals to the intellect, addresses itself also to the other faculties of man. How could nature possibly be what it is to us, if it were in fact so little as our science represents it? Nature cannot be dead; it was called nature because it was felt to be living. But our science seems dead enough. Are we not filled with im-

patience by its incessant multiplication of dead forces? Has not almost every one some contrivance in his mind for reconciling his science to his feelings? The denial of the inertness of matter may be one. Do not some, again, say that all physical causation is the direct act of the Creator?* Others, that physical causation is not *efficient* cause, but only connection in reason?† Do not all these things mean that nature must be more than it is felt to be by us? For if causation be God's direct act, why is it not to us as it is? Why does God's direct act affect us as inert force? If it be truly a connection in reason, why is it to us a connection by a passive unreasoning necessity? What causes nature to be to us different from what it is? This I seek to know. If it be not want of life in man, what is it? Of all things surely this is one of the most important for us to know; must be one of the easiest to learn. If nature is more than it is felt by us to be, do we not introduce defect into it? And if the fact of nature's laws be God's immediate act, is not God's act spiritual? It cannot be meant that God first makes inert things, and then moves them mechanically. Nor can it be meant that there are these mechanical processes, and yet no true causation in them. It must be, that a fact not truly mechanical is felt by us as if it were so. I find all men virtually assert nature spiritual; but often without reflecting that it must be the defect of man that makes it otherwise to him.

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R. We will leave this question of inertness, which still remains somewhat abstract, and come to matters more practical. Be our state what it may, can we be other than we are, while we are in this world? In this state, man is obliged to deal with physical things —phenomenal, if you like to call them so. Must we not take up our position as it is? Perhaps hereafter we shall be different.

W. Let me first remark that I think the question whether nature truly be inert or active; whether there be in it passive necessity or Love—true actual Being and Life, instead of deadness—can seem abstract only by my fault. If I could speak of it worthily, the words would glow with intensest warmth, and kindle a fire in every soul. If this be the fact, is not poetry infinitely surpassed; surpassed as God surpasses man? Is it possible that we have thought man's fancy should add beauty to God's work, exalt His world to a more illustrious grace? Poor reparation has the poet made to nature for the life of which man has robbed her. Poor, and yet man's best, and willingly received. But no—not his best. Not his best homage to the BEING God has made is rendered by his fancy, but by his steadfast pursuit of fact: not his best worship in fictitious reverence, but in sober learning of the truth. Science is the interpreter of nature; knowledge, not fancy, shows her living. *We* clothe nature with a life and beauty from our own souls, raising her to undeserved renown! Let the thought perish, and be no more remembered to our shame! Science henceforth joins hands with poetry; they are one: the image

loses itself in the reality; the shadow fades from our regard, for our hands grasp the substance. Wise poet-heart, to strive, though with what vain endeavour and pitiful shortcoming, to maintain a life in nature, a sympathy, a love, a voice to human souls. The tardier science doth approve thee true, and crown thee king.

But did you ever, with great toil and patience, using both hands and all your ingenuity, straighten out a bent spring? And when you had at length achieved the task, and seemed to see your labour finished, did the unsubdued twist renew itself, and the whole thing spring back exactly as it was at first? Just so do you serve me. You invite me to begin my whole task again; all that I have said is the answer to your question.

R. Yet I must repeat it. While we are in this world, must not our business be with physical things? Must we not accept our life as God has ordained it?

W. Assuredly we must. That is what I wish above all to do: to learn what our life is, that as God has ordained it, and not under a false notion of my own, I may accept it. Let me remind you what I say. The world is more than it is felt to be by us: it is the spiritual world. This alone we truly have to do with, for it alone truly exists. We feel it as we do, because of man's defectiveness. To think of it aright, we must (as we most easily can, most naturally do), think of it as being more than merely correspondent to our impressions; remembering that we—not are to be—but are in the eternal world, and that the fact

with which we have to do is the raising man to his true Life. Perhaps you decline to adopt this view; but at least be just. Do not say it is difficult, or unlike things that we commonly admit. What is more constantly our habit than to remember that our apprehensions are inadequate, and that the truth of things differs from our impressions? Do we not always add in our thoughts to that which, strictly speaking, we perceive? When we look at a chair, for example, do we suppose it to correspond to the impression on our sense? Clearly not; we see only parts of it: *such* a chair could not be; we infer, and conceive as existing, that which is not to our sight. We supply something wanting, the unseen portions of the chair, and then the thing is possible. What more easy than to do the same by nature, to add to it in our thought something that is wanting in our impression; to remember that our perception implies an existence unperceived; that the true existence is active, not unacting; living and not dead?

R. I cannot say that is difficult.

W. Then, if you do that, you distinguish between that which truly acts on you, and that which seems to do so. You understand that your feeling yourself to be in an inert world is a false feeling on your part.

R. That is, I consider that which *exists* to be very unlike that of which I have the impression.

W. And the cause of this difference of your impression from the truth is a condition of your own, which you share with all men. In considering the

relation of the whole human race to the existence which is present to them, you have regard to the condition of the whole human race. You reflect that man is defective—that all men are so—and that all therefore perceive the world as defective.

R. This may be very well in theory, but the practical difficulty remains :—that the world we feel and know does not exist. How can we believe it ?

W. We feel these material things : we know them to exist ? We are quite sure of it ?

R. Yes.

W. An ignorant man feels that he knows many things ; he is quite sure they are true : as that the sun moves, or that smoke rises because it is light ?

R. True : the more ignorant the man, the more sure he feels.

W. An ignorant man feels himself to know, but the things he knows are not true. Is that knowledge ?

R. No. That is ignorance.

W. Suppose that we feel certain things to exist, but the things we feel do not exist : what would that be ?

R. It would mean something false in our feeling. I perceive the argument, but you have to make good that the things we feel to exist do not exist.

W. That cannot be difficult. How can a world answering to our inadequate feeling and apprehension exist ? That which has not action is thereby proved not to be itself an existence, but an appearance produced by the action on us of something else. A world

such as we feel can no more truly BE than a chair could stand erect with the two legs we might happen to see: and for the same reason, viz., that our apprehension is inadequate. Why should it more influence our thoughts that we feel a world that is inert, than that we should see a chair with only two legs. If that which answers to our impression cannot exist, then our impression does not correspond with the truth. There is no maxim more thoroughly familiar in practice, or incorporated into our habitual thoughts, than this. Therefore I say that we can now perfectly well know the world to be spiritual, and deal with it so: knowing that our apprehension of it is defective and why it is so. That is only to recognize our true position, not to alter it. Let me take another instance: suppose it had been said, in reply to the assertion of the earth's motion, that while we are as we are the sun must be revolving *to us*, and that we should continue to think and act as if it were truly so: were not that ridiculous in theory, absurd and hurtful in practice? But not more than that we should regard the world as truly physical, because while we are as we are it must be physical to us. I say that we may know that it is not truly so, and that our thoughts and practice must conform to our true knowledge, not to our false impression. As astronomers treat the earth as moving though they feel it steadfast, so may we treat the world as spiritual, though we feel it inert. Is not thus acting according to truth, and not to appearance, always what is meant by common sense? Is it not opposed to

reason, first to say these things are but phenomena, and then to say, treat them as the realities? That which is but a phenomenon, or appearance produced by something else, I will treat so; I will treat it as it is.

But there is truth in your remark that while man is as he is we must feel as we do, and have the experience we have of a physical, material life. And hereafter, assuredly, we hope to be different. But let us not mistake. The question is, how we should act *now:* what is the truth of this present state? The answer I give is: remember man's defect of being, which alone makes us feel as we do; and treat the world as it truly is, as spiritual: have regard in all things to man's redemption. When man is made alive then phenomena shall be no more as the existence to him. Can we not easily understand that as, by defect of knowledge, man has opinions not corresponding to the truth, so by defect of being he has feelings or perceptions not corresponding to the truth.

R. This is the very point. There is a difference between the cases. An opinion is a thing which we can alter; we understand how we are and must be under mistake about things; but our experience and feelings we cannot change. The material world is real to us, as you say; then should we not treat it as being real to us? What other reality can we have anything to do with? And again with reference to your illustration of the chair of which only two legs are seen, we have a means of knowing how it truly is.

We can see all four legs by looking, or we can feel them. There is not a parallel. We cannot feel the world not to be physical as we can see a chair not to be of such a form as it presents to our sight. We always feel the world inert.

W. These are the very things that will make clear my meaning, and show you that we are not really opposed. All that I seek is to alter an *opinion.* We have thought that the reason we perceive and feel as we do is that there truly exists such a world as answers to our feeling. I say, let us think that the truly existing world is more than it is to us and that we are defective. This cannot be impossible. I seek only to understand our experience, not to alter it. If it were altered, what I say would be no longer true. The whole position of man's want of life is founded on the fact of his experience being of a physical, material world: in a word, of a dead world. The proof of man's deadness would be destroyed if nature were not felt by him as inert.

You say that we have means of correcting our impressions respecting individual things but not respecting nature as a whole: there is here however exactly the difference there ought to be. We cannot correct our impression of the world as inert, by means of our senses: it is inert to all our senses unitedly, and in every use of them; but we can correct it by means of our thought. We have an intellectual as well as a bodily perception. The laws of thought, equally with the feelings of the sense, determine our opinions. We can as certainly know that our impres-

sion of the world as inert differs from the truth, as we can that any other impression does so. We must use the appropriate means: due consideration and a right use of reason. We must reflect whether it is possible that our feeling should not be defective; whether that which is but a phenomenon and not the very fact that exists must not necessarily be unacting; whether it is not absurd to infer that therefore the very fact must be unacting also. In short, we must consider whether the argument that the world is physical to man only by his defect, be not good and sound. There is no other way in which the question ought to be decided. Nor is the question in itself peculiar. It differs from other cases of the use of reason only in its bearing and results, not in its nature.

But this is not the end. When you say that we cannot *feel* the world not to be inert as it is to our feeling, I join issue with you entirely. I affirm that we do most emphatically feel nature not to be that dead, inert mechanism which it is to our conceptions. I appeal to all the history of human thought, to literature, poetry, science; all are leavened with this feeling which you deny: that nature is more than we feel it to be. I would appeal to science above all; for all its history is a strife between these two feelings: that nature is living and that it is dead. All the strangeness and repulsiveness with which it affects uninitiated men, all the strife which it undergoes in extending its domain, the ever-renewed collision between it and religion, are due to this two-foldness of our feeling. It cannot be mere DEAD necessity that con-

stitutes this wondrous life. It is no matter that we feel it so ; we feel as much that it is not so. We FEEL a deadness and we FEEL a life. What shall we say ? How shall we apportion them ? Is the deadness man's, man's only ? May we, dare we, think so ? Is this the consummation of the hope, the resolution of the doubt, the interpretation of the mystery ? Man wrestling so long with nature, to gain this victory : to know himself ? Let me bow my head in shame, it is delight to be abased ; let me lift up my soul in joy, I will exult in God. Thou narrow and contracted heart, seeking thy own good, labouring fearful and in doubt, expand thyself, cast off thy shackles, melt and be utterly dissolved away. This is death, not life. Let glad laughter take the place of tears, and energy, new born of joy, chase weariness for ever. Oh sacred Life, that bearest us in thy bosom, swelling around our empty souls that shall be filled with thee ; in thee we do rejoice. Man's life, his hope, his destiny rise so much higher to our thought. Because our aspirations were not large enough, because we were too easily content, because we mistrusted God so much and hoped so little ; therefore the world has been so dark. Our LIFE is more than we have dared to think.

R. The question now is, not what is beautiful, but what is true. In speaking in this way about life and death, are you not confounding words, and introducing perplexity instead of giving definite knowledge ? We are living now, and we die when the breath leaves the body. These words may of course be applied, figura-

tively, to other conditions, but you do not seem to use them so. It is difficult to make the thought follow you.

W. When was a new conception, however true or simple, first introduced without such difficulty? How long it takes a person to whom the idea is strange, to understand that at the antipodes people have not their feet uppermost. And the feeling has every justification. Nothing can be plainer than that it is entirely a new use of words to say that they are not head downwards; in no possible case can the evidence of sense be more complete. Yet the whole secret lies in this: that up and down are relative terms. So are life and death. So indeed are almost all our words. It introduces no perplexity to think of this physical life and death as having their relative place within that true deadness which constitutes man physical. All our thoughts in so far as they are disciplined, or approach towards accuracy, are moulded into this relative form. Do we not think of things as being at once large and small in different relations, or as relatively true yet absolutely false? May not a thing be truly moving, yet relatively at rest, so that we consider it as either, according to the relations in which we regard it? Even so may man be truly dead, yet relatively living, and be considered as either, according as he is regarded in relation to the absolute, or to the phenomenal—to the true life or to the apparent. I deny that there is any perplexity here, or any laxity in the use of language. I use the words life and death because I mean the things. And for justifica-

tion I appeal to every literature. What tongue is there in which a life and death of man, apart from bodily life and death, are not recognised; another relation of man than to the physical?

R. But you seem to invert the natural order of ideas. We have been accustomed to regard the life which we are conscious of as being primary, and as the basis of all:—that we are truly living as men, but, according to the state of our feelings or our will, we have or have not a life to the spiritual. You seem to imply something the opposite to this.

W. I admit that I seek to associate a new thought with the words life and death. But am I not right in doing so? Do I not rather restore, than invert, the truly natural use? Have I not made it good that this physical life, with consciousness of the self within and perception of external deadness, is not the true life of man: that it arises, and must arise, from want of life in him? If this be true, then I am right in speaking as I do of life and death. If it be not, then my whole thought is wrong, and my use of these words is only part of a larger error. Words must follow thoughts, although they may also lead them.

I say that if we perceived things as they truly are, we should consciously perceive that man is wanting in life; and that we may now think and act according to the truth, unembarrassed by our false consciousness. Our consciousness of life, when man is not living, need no more perplex us than our consciousness of rest when man is not at rest.

R. You would have us take a view apart from our

own mode of feeling, and rise above that which is perceived by man as he now is, to that which would be perceived by him if he were different?

W. Exactly. All our perplexity comes from making our consciousness the measure of the fact, instead of recognizing it as the measure only of the phenomenon, from which the fact is to be learnt. Assuming that which is consciously present to our perception to be that which is, we can comprehend nothing. Intellectually the world is a mystery to us; morally a fearful problem. Am I wrong in saying that there is a remedy for this state of things in remembering that man's deficiency modifies his impressions and convictions, and in endeavouring to ascertain in what respects the very fact that is must exceed what is to his consciousness? That is, technically, to find out and exclude the negative element in his perception by taking it into himself. If we will do that the clouds roll back, the darkness turns to light. Nothing is altered: but we understand. Our daily work remains the same as before, but it is done with a new spirit. We direct our aim to the reality, using the phenomena with reference to that, treating them not falsely, as for or by themselves, but truly as they are, in relation to a different fact which alone causes them to be perceived. We live for man's redemption. We see that the raising man to true and worthy life is the secret of human experience, the sacred mystery of nature.

R. Here let me ask you another question. There is a want of coherence in your language. You say,

first, the cause of our experience is our presence in a defective state in the spiritual world, and then that it is the raising man to life. Do you mean to say that these are the same? If I granted that a spiritual object (as defined by you, *i.e.* a not-inert one) is the cause of my perception of an inert object, say a table *e.g.*, how can the redemption of man be also that cause? When I ask of you: what causes me to perceive a table? I might receive as a fair answer, "the action on you of an object different from a table, and especially in this, that it is not inert as the table is;" but what can I think of such an answer as this: "Man's being made alive causes you to see a table:" and especially what am I to think when both these answers are given at once? To me they seem, to say the least, by no means the same.

W. I owe you more explanation on this point, but I think you will easily see that the inconsistency is only apparent. Let me revert to the ordinary idea, that our perception is caused by the operation on us of physical things. Now I ask the same question: What causes me to perceive a table? and you answer me, "the action on you of the table." But again I ask you, this time as a physiologist: What causes me to perceive a table? and you say, "a certain condition of your nervous system, some molecular operation in your nerves and brain." Ought I to charge you with inconsistency? These are two views of the same thing. My two positions, that the cause of our experience is the action on us of spiritual existence, and that it is the raising man

to a truly living state, are two views of the same thing likewise.

R. But you do not make clear your view with respect to our perception of physical things.

W. My expressions may have seemed obscure, because they were meant to be general. I do not give any opinion as to the details of our perception, nor do I attempt to separate perception of physical things from the total of our consciousness. Of that consciousness as a whole I say that it must be due to the action on us of an existence not inert (or physical), and that our having conscious perception of inert things as the existence demonstrates a defect in man. But I do not go farther. Possibly we may hereafter attain sufficient knowledge to enable us to understand why our perception must be in all respects such as it is. But we should ill have profited by the past if, directly a new problem is presented to us, we began to guess.

R. I understand you to say that you only affirm, in general, that the Fact which truly exists is spiritual, and that the action of this true existence upon us may be represented by saying that it is the making man alive. This is man's relation to the spiritual: but you do not attempt to go further.

W. Yes. I do not entertain any opinion why the truly existing (or absolute) should cause us to perceive stars and planets, or earth and water, or trees and animals. I think some dim intimations of why it should be so may be gathered, some guides to investigation feebly grasped; but such questions do not press for

solution ; they do not bear upon the question whether the perceived defect is in man or apart from him.

If I might illustrate my meaning again, I would say that the proof that the earth revolves, and not the heavens, is entirely independent of any question about the nature of the starry universe, or the reasons of the planetary courses. These were problems for future investigation, and even yet they are but begun. But the knowledge of the earth's motion was the indispensable basis for the commencement of the researches which promise us, in these respects, so ample a reward. So I conceive that the recognition of deadness as man's, and not as nature's, is a basis indispensable for the commencement of an investigation as to what nature truly is, and why we must feel it as we do.

R. When you say that the spiritual world is the Fact which causes me to perceive a physical one, I must neither suppose you to mean that chairs and tables are spiritual, nor that there are spiritual chairs and tables, of which these are the images, as perhaps some Neo-Platonists meant ; but simply that my perception of these phenomena is due to the existence and action of Being which is different from them, of which we can know that it is certainly spiritual, and that the inertness we perceive cannot belong to it ; but you do not pretend to say why it should cause us to perceive as we do. In a word, you leave the particular relation of the phenomenal to the existing to be investigated, if it be found capable of investigation.

W. Precisely so: the effect which the fact must produce upon our consciousness involves the three elements—1st of what *it* is, 2nd what *we* are, 3rd the relation between us and it. If we knew more of ourselves and our relations to the fact of nature, the effect on us, of which we are conscious, would surely enable us to know something respecting *it*. But nothing is truly so unreasonable as our habit of inferring causes directly from the phenomena we perceive, in cases in which our knowledge is not complete. I was struck with a trivial illustration of this a short time ago, when a bright circle of light suddenly darted around the walls of my room. The children were delighted. I do not know what they thought of the cause, but I should never have imagined it myself, without a good deal of experience of the deceptiveness of sense: a man was carrying a tin can past the window in the sun. Now it is easy to see how this cause should produce such an impression on me when I understand the circumstances: the sunshine, the reflection of light, and so on. But suppose me without such knowledge: how then should I possibly have inferred a tin can from what I saw? I cannot even now detect the slightest resemblance between what was present to my consciousness, and that which caused it to be so. I could not help thinking what an infatuation possesses us when we fancy we can immediately infer from our impressions of nature, from that which is present to our consciousness, what that is which causes it to be so. I wondered that I ever should have inferred, from the aggregate

of my impressions, that the cause of them is a material world corresponding thereto. I am by far too ignorant. This only I venture to say: that if we could ascertain all the circumstances, we should see that our impressions ought to be such as they are, and should be able to trace how they must arise; even as I can, in scientific fashion, trace my impression of that meteoric flash to the sun and the tin can.

But I bethink me of another use of my illustration. Have you not watched children trying to catch such flashes? Alas, my friend, that is not only done in play and amid merry shouts of laughter. My ears are filled with groans and blasphemy instead, and faces pale with care and scarred with passion rise before my eyes. The scene is changed; but not the actors nor the game. Game do I call it? it is grown to deadly earnest; a mad battle for the glancing shadow. Hope and despair; triumph and rage; hatred and envy—let the scene be closed. These are our Brothers that we look upon—ourselves. Will no voice warn us? Shall we never know? Never, like grown men, turn from the Appearance to the CAUSE?

R. I understand you then to say that the Fact which causes all these things to be present to our consciousness is spiritual; and that in relation to us this spiritual fact is the making Man alive. Consequently that to regard things as they truly are, and to act according to the fact and not to the mere appearance, we must in all things consider and have respect to the redemption of man. That is the reason which

necessitates, and is the only true cause of, all our experience.

And you say that our natural, and as it were intuitive, conviction of the true existence of these inert things is due to our natural ignorance: being just such a conviction as a person looking through a stereoscope, without knowledge of the circumstances, would have of the existence of a solid body. And as to act aright, or to succeed in his action, in reference to the object of his vision, the gazer through a stereoscope must act not according to his impressions, but according to a knowledge founded on examination and reflection; must act with reference to something different from that which "is to him;" even so must we. If we would practically succeed, we must treat that with which we have to do as being of a different kind from that which we are immediately conscious of. We must guide ourselves by a knowledge which subordinates our natural impressions.

W. Even so. If we separate the phenomena, the things that are present to our consciousness, from their connection with that existence (of whatever kind it be) which is truly acting upon us to make us perceive, and then ask whether those phenomena exist, of course they do not. It is like asking whether a single solid thing exists in a stereoscope, ignoring the pictures. The entire difficulty about the material world arises from the disconnexion of the phenomena from the fact. Let them be rejoined, and nothing can be simpler. The physical world exists as a thing that we are made to perceive by our relation to the

spiritual. It has this existence and no other. There would never have been any need to discuss the existence of the phenomenal, unless such a false, isolated existence, apart from that which is not phenomenal, had been asserted for it, through our ignorance. Any person may see the nature of the case directly, who will suppose himself, through ignorance, convinced of the presence of a solid body in a stereoscope, and another person denying it, and trying to make him understand that there are two pictures instead. Let him conceive that the denial of the solid body seems to him like a denial of common sense, like affirming that there is nothing there at all, but that all is an illusion, and that to refer his impressions to two pictures and the laws of his own vision seems to him absurd : then he will realize the nature of the difficulty which is felt when the physical world is denied to exist, and our consciousness of it referred to a spiritual existence and the state of man's own being.

R. It is only through ignorance that we are so convinced of the existence of physical things ? That is an impression which needs to be corrected by learning the true circumstances of the case ?

W. Yes. It is not they that exist, but something more and better than they.

R. But it is difficult to avoid being confused by these illustrations. The difference is so great between one material thing making us seem to perceive a different one, and that which is not material making us truly perceive things which are material.

W. Hold fast to the difference. If the cases were the same, how could one serve to illustrate the other? The one relates to portions of our relative experience, the other to man's experience as a whole. Yet these instances of known sensuous deception are true to the point in hand. They help us to understand what the nature of perception is; to recognize that what is consciously present to our perception must depend on what we are, and how we are circumstanced. They should at least suffice to break through the only real obstacle to an understanding that the world is not physical, viz., our firm persuasion that what we set down as our consciousness cannot land us in a false conviction.

R. There is more besides. This physical world is so very unlike what we hold the spiritual to be. Ask yourself like a reasonable man: How can our being in a spiritual world make us live upon a solid earth, build material houses, eat material food, do all these unquestionably material things? Why should we not think that we are spirits dwelling in material bodies, as we have always believed? It makes everything so simple. That I——I was going to say—*that* I understand.

W. It is well you stopped. Do not you see that this is exactly the hypothesis, or supposition according to appearance, of which it is the nature to seem simple at first, and be found mysterious and incomprehensible at last? That is to the intellect the broad path that leads where it should refrain from going. We must be content to enter the strait

gate. In respect to knowledge, as to life, heaven is inexorable: the path is only one. We must submit to use reflection and thought, to be guided by evidence, to incur trouble, to set aside convictions however cherished, if they will not stand. We must begin so. The entrance is hard; not the end. The end is liberty, and light, and gladness. If I could make you feel what it is to know that man is wanting in his life and that we *are* deceived, you would not argue with me any more.

R. But it is hard to conceive that these solid things do not exist. We take them as the type of existence rather; when we say of any other things that they exist, we mean that they are as real as these.

W. It is not exactly so. Of some things we are obliged to say that they are more real than these. And in truth the difficulty is not so great as it appears. It is the substantialness of the world that makes it real to us; that we work and walk about in it. In fact, it is its *existence in space.* Did it ever occur to you to ask yourself what space is? or how man arrives at the notion of it? Reflect for a moment. Is not space exactly negation—absence of existence—pure and entire "not-being." We cannot think of utter absence of being under any other mode than that of space; we cannot exclude space from our thought when we think of absence of existence. For when we try to exclude space from our conception, we have to think of BEING that is not in space; as spirit is held to be by some. Is it not a striking

thing, that we have obtained from our experience of the physical world an idea which, when we examine it, we find to be that merely of not-being; and that this not-being is the essential condition of the physical. Let us not scruple to use our reason. Surely the feeling and conception of *space* is the very one which we ought to receive in feeling that to exist which does not exist. Space, or not-being, may well be the condition, or mode of existence, of the "phenomenon." It is like the inertia, or not-action, which we also associate with it, and tells truly the same tale.

R. It is of course the occupancy of space that makes things solid or substantial to us.

W. It is their "existence in not-being!" that which we feel as real demands "not-being" as its condition! Do we not find out, by this curious linking of our ideas, that we are feeling that to be which is not? Or again: let it be supposed that man feels that to exist which does not truly exist: can we think of any other way in which this could be, than by means of that very solidity which we associate with existence in space. Inert things thus are our realities. Their existence is not truly existence, and we aptly term it existence in space: it is the reality to us of the unreal. Man feels himself in space by his defectiveness; by his want of being, "not-being" is felt around him.

R. Let us leave these abstract thoughts. I grant that I cannot prove the existence of any world at all by the present metaphysics.

W. Analogies help us more, and they are never wanting to anything that is true, for nature lends all her treasures to adorn whatever she acknowledges. What we feel so strange is that we should perceive around us so definite and substantial a habitation as this earth, if the physical does not exist absolutely, but is merely the phenomenon to us of some other existence. But look at the sky at night. Consider the firmament. Is it not stretched as a canopy folding in the earth, of definite circumference, and solid look? Do not say no; for humanity would testify against you. History proves that it appears so to man's natural eye. Is there any such canopy around the earth? Is there anything like it? Man dwells, to his consciousness, in an encircling heaven—which is not. A habitation, bright with gems and stretched on everlasting pillars, has been prepared for him; by what? By his presence to infinity bestrewn with lavish worlds. And why? Because it is the nature of his sight. Why should not man's presence to the spiritual infinitude of Being place him, to his consciousness, in a home like earth, amid a universe of stars? Do we ask why it should? Because it is the nature of his present state to feel as dead that which is living; because the phenomenon which he perceives is different from the fact, and by his defect of being the phenomenon is his reality.

DIALOGUE II.

R. I CLEARLY see your meaning: one thing acts upon us, and another is consciously present to our perception. The former you call the Fact, and assert that it is spiritual or active; the latter is the phenomenon, and it is physical or inert. The spiritual truly exists, the physical exists only as an appearance. If man were in a truly living state—not defective in his being—he would have feelings correspondent to the truth: but inasmuch as he is defective, his feeling is wrong. He feels that which is only phenomenal to be, if not the sole, at least a true existence. And then, thinking according to this false feeling, he finds himself in entire perplexity and unable to understand the very being of anything. You would say that he needs to direct his thoughts according to a different plan.

W. If we directly know only phenomena, what is the practical inference? How should we learn, or try to learn, the fact from them?

R. Of course we must have regard to the state of man, and consider any conditions which may modify his impressions. This is not new, for the common idea of the world, as consisting essentially of matter

and force, also involves a consideration of man, and how things are altered to his perception. It reduces, for example, sound and light to mere motions of particles, and supposes in man such a "nature" as causes him to perceive this bright and variegated and musical and odorous world, through the action on him of something wonderfully different.

W. Quite true. I only wished to apply an established principle. If any one will take up this question simply on its merits, I cannot doubt that he will agree with me in thinking that nature must be *less* to us than it truly is, and not more: and that we have only for a time fallen into the other way of thinking of it, because of our ignorance. Surely any idea which enables us to escape from the necessity of supposing that matter and motion mysteriously affect us with such perceptions as we have, ought to be welcomed as a great relief. We get accustomed to such views, and so lose all sense of their amazing difficulty, and quite fail to remember how they would impress us if we now heard them for the first time.

Thus the question stands: Nature is not truly and in itself such as it is to our perception. This is common ground: Nature is altered to us by man's being such as he is. What then is that in man which alters it? Is it his known defectiveness, or is it a power in him of adding innumerable qualities? According as we answer this question will be our inference from our perceptions. If it be the latter, then we infer an inert matter and endless forces different from what we are conscious of: if the former, then we infer an

acting, spiritual world different from what we are conscious of. Is not the relation between these views evident in the mere statement? Are they not, respectively, hypothesis and truth? Is not the former merely a construction man puts upon his experience in his ignorance, before he has learned to read it aright? Does he not cling to it now, as he has clung to all other such errors, for no reason but that he is accustomed to it?

R. You might strengthen your argument logically by asking also whether it be, on any ground, admissible to assume many positive elements in man, as altering nature to him, when one known defect will serve the purpose. There would be no reasoning at all, there would be no more any science, if one known cause could not demand to be received, instead of several merely assumed to account for the phenomena.

W. You are right. Man's defectiveness is known. That is a point on which all schools of thought agree. So that my position is this: Nature is made to differ, to our consciousness, from that which it truly is by a known cause; namely, by man's defectiveness. That defective or inert existence therefore, which we conceive, is not the truth of nature, any more than that which is to our sense.

R. That is, indeed, only saying that science deals with phenomena alone, and that man's thought does not penetrate to the fact.

W. But observe: I affirm of the fact, not only that it is not inert or material, but that it is spiritual.

Here I fall back upon the conscience in man. I say: If we admit that the fact of these phenomenal processes is not an inert necessity, but is true action, then we must admit it to be *right* action. Science proves the true being of nature holy, in proving the phenomenon of it inert. If there were not necessity, or holiness, in the Fact, how should there be necessity, or inertia, in the appearance? For can we separate moral quality from action truly so called?

R. But does excluding the perceived inertness from the fact of nature, truly involve its spirituality, in the sense of such activeness as we can denote holy?

W. I should be most happy for this conclusion to be tested in every way; but I cannot myself think at all in any other. I cannot even conceive any third course. By saying that there is true action, I mean holy action, and cannot suppose myself meaning anything else. If the moral element be rejected, I am landed in inertness again at once. On this point, therefore, I am wholly in your hands. But if the argument needed re-enforcing, might we not appeal to that which nature is, to the wonderful processes and results of the organic and inorganic laws, and ask: If there be not passive necessity as cause of this, then what cause? if neither mechanical, nor spiritual, necessity is here, then what necessity at all? how can these things be? I should say: Inert necessity *appears* to account for the course of nature; Holiness does truly account for it. But besides these, what account can possibly be conjectured? Especially, what account which does not re-introduce the banished

inactivity? If it be replied that we are not called upon to account for it at all, I should make answer that all systems do give account of it in some mode or other, and that if my argument be allowed, we have agreed that that which exists is not inert. We have gone so far as to account for the course of nature by true, and not by apparent, or passive action.

R. I remark here a difficulty you labour under in respect to words. You do not mean to affirm of the fact all that we associate with the word "moral." Not such moral action as ours; such holiness, maintained against temptation and in spite of self; but a holiness from which these elements of strife are banished; a true, spontaneous, necessary holiness, such as we hope for in heaven, such as we adore in God. You are obliged to use the word moral, but the idea it conveys needs elevating.

W. The word spiritual is better. That seems to me to express the true conception. I might define it as that in which holiness is necessary. Man's toil and struggle to be holy arise from want of the spiritual in him; they arise from self. There is true holiness in nature because self is not: there is no liking evil, which alone makes "virtue" possible. But in one word nature's necessity is Love. Holiness is action made necessary by love.

R. But if the inertness we perceive be not truly in nature, if that particular defectiveness be due to man's condition, still it does not follow that there is not some defect in nature. We do not thereby assert its absolute perfectness. I presume you would admit this.

W. Certainly. All possible questions of that sort remain open. I affirm only that the phenomenon alone is inert or material: the true existence of nature acts, or is spiritual.

R. I see that our inference of a material world rests upon our perception of inertness. Matter and motion are what we must infer, assuming our impression of nature as inert to be correct. And the question you would have us ask is: *Why* are our impressions such as they are; such that, not recognizing them to be influenced by man's defectiveness, we have necessarily inferred the material world, with all its properties and forces?

But do we not here come to this fact: that we are ourselves conscious of *moving?* This consciousness of motion is the chief ground of belief in matter and motion as constituting the world.

W. True. That which we feel to exist is in space; that which we are conscious of involves motion. I do not deny the *materialness of the phenomenon*, or of that which is to our consciousness. Keep your eye steadily to the point. Nature is material *to us;* we consciously move in it, and must do so. But the question is: What is the true cause of this consciousness? What is nature apart from us?

R. You mean that there is not truly motion, although we are conscious of it: that which truly exists, and makes us feel motion, is different. You treat motion as we have treated luminousness, and say that we are made to be conscious in that way by something that does not resemble that which we are conscious of.

W. That is what I mean—and I have, at least, examples to urge in support of it—that motion is a mode in which we feel something that is not itself like motion. But again: evidently the question of *motion* and that of *space* are one. As space is a condition of all phenomenal existence, so does motion seem to be of all phenomenal action. It is curious that we cannot think of any material action, except under the form of motion. Some men argue, absolutely, that all material processes can be nothing else than forms of motion, and for my own part I profess an inability to *conceive* them in any other way than as motions, either of larger or of smaller particles. This fact is full of instruction. Motion, in this respect, agrees with all those qualities which are introduced into our perceptions by our own condition (all subjective qualities), viz., in being universal. It applies to all our perceptions: as any condition must which belongs to ourselves. I would suggest that it is a condition of our own that necessitates our conceiving all perceived actions as motion. All the action of nature, of whatever kind, is motion to man's thought. Light, or sound, or warmth, everything which he perceives, refuses, when he endeavours to conceive it, to be anything but motion to him. And indeed, if we consider, it is evident that the mere fact of man's consciousness of space necessitates this. All that he perceives he must refer in thought to action in space, or in respect to space, which is motion.

R. Perhaps there is something in this. I do not wish to be one of those men, of whom William Harvey

says, that "they will not receive a new system unless it explains everything." It is surprising how natural it is to adduce any unexplained circumstance as an argument against a new view, without considering whether that view ought to explain it, or whether it is better explained the other way. All of us have a feeling, as if an opinion we have before entertained ought to be held, not only until there is sufficient evidence in favour of another, but until that other has given an explanation of every question we can ask. I have learned to be on my guard against that weakness.

W. Harvey could not explain why the arteries were found empty after death. At least he could only suggest probable reasons. The idea that they contained vital spirits accounted perfectly for that circumstance. Yet it was proved that the blood circulates, although the reason of the emptiness of the arteries remained to be investigated.

R. It may be proved, you would say, that the Fact of nature is spiritual, although many things cannot be accounted for.

W. Observe: I do not deny that "we move;" but I inquire what is the true meaning of that statement. There is motion, of course, in the same sense as there are physical things. Motion is either truly existing, or is phenomenal only, according as that which EXISTS is truly physical, or only phenomenally so. The question is whether our consciousness is to be assumed as correct, or whether it is to be investigated and accounted for. And I would suggest

farther, whether the right question for us to ask respecting all our experience be not this : why *we* are so impressed ; why *we* have been obliged to make such suppositions and entertain such convictions? In connection with the material world, the sole fact is that men have been, and we are, impressed with a conviction of its existence. But why should it be called a "melancholy" fact if there be not such a world ? What should follow but that there is a better one ? Where is the harm if we are at first under illusion ? When once we know ourselves to be so the practical evil is at an end. Or if we erect our impressions into an authority, and say, "There is a material world," what are we advantaged ? We have gained for our belief a world of low inferior order, one that even we cannot but feel to have some evilness and degradation in it. If we will admit a different plan of thinking, and consider man's known defect, then we may believe a world at least excelling that in value, one that is at least perfect to *our* thought. It is every way a gain. Is the sun less bright, the earth less solid, food less satisfying, are smiles less sweet or words less full of meaning, to one who believes that the world is different from that which it is felt by him to be, than to another ? Is his confidence less in the stability of the natural laws, because he refers them to an absolute holiness, instead of to mysterious "properties," of which he cannot know that it may not be the property to alter, or at least to produce different effects, to-morrow ? It can, at least, be no loss. Our sensations are not altered by the

change in our views, as all agree in urging. What then is the difference—the difference to thought and belief, in respect to which alone a difference exists? Is it not wholly an advantage? One has, to his belief, a low dead world, not to be understood, with some strange badness in it: the other a world infinitely glorious, thrilling his soul to ecstasy, and a conviction of deadness in himself that rises into aspiration towards a worthier life for all.

For is it not evident that we need not affirm defect without us, if we will admit it in ourselves, in man? Suppose defect within: will it not be perceived without? And to perceive defect without, what could that be but to be in a material world, or something essentially the same? I will not go so far as to say that a Being who, by defect within, perceives defect without must feel himself surrounded by, and embodied in, matter: but I can think of no other way in which there could be perception of defect as external. Must not such a Being feel inertness in his world, and be conscious of exertion, and of force? Would he not necessarily infer matter, and suppose "inertia," and construct a science of passive laws, based on the fact that the action around him did not vary? He would think nature dead, nor even ask himself the question whether it could be truly so, until he had exhausted all contrivances to maintain his impression as the truth.

R. As to our being conscious of moving, it occurs to me that there is what you call a phenomenal illustration, which might help us to understand it. We

feel ourselves conscious of being steadfast, and of the earth being at rest, yet we have good reason for believing, not only that it is not so, but that there is no such thing as that kind of rest in the universe, and that all the stars are in motion. If we can be conscious of steadfastness while there is truly no such thing, why may we not be conscious of moving though there is truly no such thing as motion? What we are conscious of and what truly exists are different questions.

W. I thank you for your suggestion. Parallels of this kind are at least of avail to meet objections that are apparent only; and help to clear the course of an argument from considerations which do not truly affect the conclusion. And let me point out to you how your remark also bears upon what you just now observed, that nature may not be wholly free from defect, although not having in it the defect which we perceive as inertness—although that may be from man. The sun and stars are moving, although the obvious motion which man at first attributes to them is due to his own. We need first to understand their relative steadfastness, and our own motion, before we can begin to examine whether they truly move. So, perhaps, we may inquire respecting defect in nature, when we have first recognised its relative perfectness, and man's defect.

And while this idea is before us, let me remark an application of it to the question of freewill. We feel conscious of an arbitrary freedom. Yet perhaps it may be, not only that man's arbitrariness is not freedom, but that there is and can be no such freedom;

that man feels himself conscious of a thing that cannot be, and that in fact freedom excludes arbitrariness.

R. That may be true: at least it is beautiful to think. Then God, as of all Beings the most free, is also the most free from arbitrariness. With Him wrong is impossible. His sovereignty is His absolute rectitude. His will nothing can constrain or draw aside.

But let me put an illustration of yours in my own way. The sun is revolving to us, but we think of it as at rest, and of man as revolving: nature is inert, or dead, to us, why should we not think of it as active or living (spiritual), and of man as wanting life? We are not conscious of man's motion, we infer it from his perception: so we are not conscious of man's deadness, we infer it from his perception. And in each case we find a practical benefit in our better knowledge.

W. Thank you.

R. Let me try again. As, in respect to any solid body, that which we can perceive by sight (or see) must differ from the truth of that object by defect; that is, the object must be more than can be perceived by sight—as that which can be "seen" is only surface or appearance, and to say of *that* "it is" would be to affirm the existence of an appearance:—so, in respect to true existence, that which we can perceive by the intellect (or think) must differ by defect from that which IS. That which can be thought is only a phenomenon: and to say that "IT IS," is to affirm the existence of a phenomenon.

Thus, for example, we must think of the world as

material, must conceive matter and force; but we should never think of saying it IS so. Matter and force differ from the true BEING of nature by defect.

W. You understand that these are used as illustrations of a proposition independently proved, and not as themselves proofs.

R. I understand. That which is not the true existence of nature must differ from that existence in not acting. Let me ask you a question here. The phenomenon may be defined as that which is present to consciousness. Now when that which is present to consciousness differs from that which truly exists, of course it will be inert; it will be a phenomenon only, and cannot act. But might there not be a case in which the phenomenon and the true existence should be the same? Might not that which is present to consciousness correspond truly to the fact? And then would not the phenomenon also be not-inert, also be active or spiritual?

W. I think with you; in such a case, in which the phenomenal and the absolute should be one, or perception agree with the truth of things, the Being would surely be *consciously* in a spiritual world.

R. Now I see that I have been defining the very thing that you call the true life of Man. If Man's defect or deadness were removed, then that which he is conscious of would not any more be defective or inert. The true existence of nature would be to him as it is; he would perceive things as they are, and the distinction between phenomenon and fact would be done away.

W. It might be so. This would surely answer well to the idea of being in a spiritual world, that the world should be to us, as it is in truth, spiritual ; and this could only be by the taking away from us of the defectiveness which modifies our feeling. That would be to escape from the physical. The thought seems consistent and simple enough ; yet I would not affirm it. These simple and natural thoughts are apt to deceive. They must be false when our knowledge is imperfect, and I do not think we yet know all that must determine the answer to your question. Perhaps the phenomenon may always, and necessarily, differ from the fact, but when man's defect of being is removed they may be *consciously associated in his feeling;* and the physical may present itself to us aright, not as that which IS, but as the mode under which that which IS appears to us. This latter thought more commends itself to the affections. Do you see that so this beautiful phenomenal universe (it may be under ever changing forms) might always remain to us, but not as the reality ; being known and felt as it is, in its true dependence on spiritual being, and as perceived by us only by our relation to that being ? Do not you see how in that way we might retain our hold on all that we have loved and lived for, not losing it in passing to a different state, but having it glorified and gladdened, and enriched with unspeakable meaning ? and not only so, but we may conceive of unnumbered universes, equal to, or surpassing this in glory, though this surpasses infinitely all our thought. Unnumbered universes, perceived, enjoyed,

and known as the phenomena of the one true Universe that IS. Thus we multiply creation, infinitely, to our thought. Nor let it be said: that were to make a mere illusion of all. How should it be so? What value is there in *matter?* Will any one pretend that the dead substratum has any worth, of any sort, real or imaginary, and that the Universe we know would not be more rather than less, if the inference of matter were proved a mistake?

R. We have an idea that God's power is displayed, or proved, by the creation of matter: bringing into existence that which did not exist. So we have a certain momentary reluctance to part with it, until we reflect that we give it up only for a Universe more noble, and in which God's creative glory is therefore more displayed. We must be glad rather than sorry, to understand that this low, evil thing is not that which God has created, but that which man has invented; that it measures man's power of apprehending, not God's power of making. But I do not know that I wholly see your meaning about unnumbered universes, perceived by different classes of Beings, as phenomena of one and the same true Universe.

W. Will you allow me another illustration? The relation between the phenomenal and the fact seems to me exactly to resemble that between false appearances and the truth of things. I should say: as the appearance is to the phenomenon, so is the phenomenon to the fact. From an appearance, by considering our phenomenal relations, we learn the

phenomenon, or that which is true to thought: from the phenomenon, by considering man's actual relations, we learn the fact, or that which is the very truth of being. The one process is ever available to illustrate the other.

Thus, for the point in question. Should we not be sorry if, in learning that the stars constitute a boundless universe instead of a limited sphere as they are to us, we lost our old familiar heavens, and no more saw the accustomed constellations? that is, if the *appearance* were altered by our true apprehension of the *phenomenon*. And why, in gaining a true apprehension of the fact, should the familiar phenomenon be taken from us? Is it not enough for us to *conceive* the stars aright? Do we wish them to look different? So, would it not be enough for us to feel and know the universe as it is; why should the phenomenon be altered? Only let it be *but* phenomenon to our experience. Let our Life be in the Fact, even as our *thought* is of the genuine stars, and not of globelets rolling round on wheels.

As for the different phenomenal universes perceived by different Beings, this will illustrate what I mean. Is there not a different apparent universe to the dwellers on every separate star or planet, if there be any such? Is there not a different appearance of the heavens to every differently organized eye? And yet but one phenomenon:—the stars that we conceive.

R. I must ask you one thing more on this subject; what happens at the death of the body?

W. I do not know; and I avoid expressing any

opinion on that subject, in order that my argument may not be embarrassed by any mistake I might fall into.

R. But you must have some opinion.

W. Certain things I think: for instance, that men do not pass into the spiritual world thereby, because they are in it now: that they do not come at death to the end of a probation for eternity, because I find that idea of probation to be a human doctrine, and as it seems to me a mistaken one: that there is nothing in that change to remove the defect under which men are, and which causes them to feel inertness without them. I see in it nothing to make men good, nothing to make them worse. In fine, I am perfectly content to wait for better ground of judging, which I believe will hereafter be found. Why should I be in haste? Do not I know that Man is redeemed, that ALL MEN shall be brought to Christ? I have, however, certain individual impressions, which are of purely private interest, and I gather also, from the New Testament, intimations of an anticipation on the part of Christian men of being present with the Lord on the occurrence of that event.

But I cannot cease to be astonished, when I think that the entire religious opinions of so many men are based upon their supposition of what happens at the death of the body. Of course I feel how prone we are to this; but if we ask ourselves whether we really do know, surely we must at once admit that we do not. We have in fact adopted ancient heathen speculations, and grafted them upon the Bible.

R. Do you think then that the Bible is silent on the subject?

W. I do not. I think much may be gathered from its words, and if there were any practical necessity for deciding, we might enter into the discussion. But I do not feel it an urgent question. For all practical ends I know enough: I know the redemption. That I believe, not because I understand how it is to take place, but because it is expressly revealed; and because, reading nature by the light of the Gospel, I see it there also.

R. Then in order to believe that man is to be saved, we need not know what happens at death?

W. Clearly not. And further, I believe that we cannot rightly, or wisely, attempt to unravel that problem, until we can feel thus calmly respecting it. The first condition for any true knowledge on that question seems to me that we should be content to wait for it, and be patient.

R. When we reflect, what is there in bodily dying which should have made us think it so great and decisive a change? Surely we have been carried away by the undue influence of the senses, in thinking of it as we have done.

W. I believe that is the secret of it. To sense, bodily death seems a consummation, an ending, a great and terrible catastrophe. It is no wonder that men should have associated religious ideas with it, as they have done.

R. We have distinguished dying from the rest of our experience, as if it had some special connection

with, and determination of, our spiritual destiny. Can that be a mistake?

W. Think of the New Testament. Are there, in any part of it, any such exhortations to secure salvation while life lasts, as are so abundant in our discourses and books of religion? Is there not an utter dissimilarity of tone between the scriptural writers and those who, in these days, urge men to repent on the score of the nearness of death? I know no greater contrast anywhere.

R. We need not pursue the subject. I perceive that this is but part of the general idea. If we have been mistaken, as you affirm, respecting man's present deadness, it is easy to understand that we have been mistaken respecting the spiritual bearing of bodily death. Whether there be any passages of Scripture which imply the ordinary conception of the results of dying, I will reserve for thought.

W. There is one that will readily occur to you: the parable of Dives and Lazarus.

R. How do you understand that?

W. It is a passage I do not profess perfectly to understand. But I think you will see that it does not decide anything in the present question. The expressions which dwell in our minds do not contain the ideas we associate with them.

R. The rich man is tormented after death.

W. I do not deny that evil-doers have this destiny.

R. But between him and Lazarus there is a great gulf fixed, which neither can pass.

W. There is. Is not this the doctrine of the New Testament throughout, and of the Old also? "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots?" Does the bad man ever become good by his own self-act, is he not always renewed by God? And do not we ourselves speak in the same way? Is there not an impassable gulf fixed by God between the good and the evil? In short, I think the ideas we connect with this passage are not in the words themselves, but are attached to them by us because they are previously in our minds. For what can have made us subordinate the explicit statements which assert the redemption of all to phrases which form part of the machinery of a parable? Is this in conformity with our own established principles? Is there not proof here that we have brought ideas of our own to the New Testament?

DIALOGUE III.

R. LET us pass to another subject. In respect to *Matter*, you set aside any authority of our supposed intuitions and ask: What has made it necessary for men to infer it? And you answer, that it is a defectiveness of their own being which has made them feel as reality that which is but phenomenal. Hence, inasmuch as a phenomenon of course cannot act, they have been compelled to infer an unacting substratum. It is a false inference necessitated by man's own condition, and only to be escaped from through better knowledge: in this respect being like all the other false inferences men have been compelled to make. And this is why the question of matter has been so contended. It has been an inference at once necessary and false. However easy to disprove, still while the necessity of inferring it remains, through overlooking man's defect, it holds its ground. Thus comes the state of things which has been so often noticed, that men continue to believe in matter though they admit the arguments against it. That result is involved in the nature of the case. And the supposition of an authority in our perceptions, to vouch without investigation for the true nature of that which

causes them, follows as an attempt to bridge over this difficulty, until the solution of it be found in man's defective apprehension. But this supposition is opposed to experience, which shows that our direct perceptions are not, in the case of individual phenomena, authoritative as to the nature of that which causes them :—opposed to reason, which shows that what we are immediately conscious of must depend in part on what we are, and how we are related to the object which acts on us :—opposed to the emotions, which reject with indignant scorn the idea that nature can truly be what the matter and motion hypothesis represents it :—opposed, in fine, to every sound method of judging of the relation of causes and effects ; for if we grant nature to be matter and force, how can it possibly make us perceive what we do, or indeed perceive anything at all? That beautiful problem, of the relation between the percipient consciousness and the world, has changed itself, under this method of taking our impressions for granted, into the blackest, dreariest, most impassable of gulfs. We come to a sudden halt. Between matter out there and my sight of a flower, let no rash mortal presume to indicate the least dream of a rational connection.

W. Yet I thought matter had been inferred in order to account for our perceptions. Why then does it fail exactly when we come to the whole final cause of its supposition? Why not, in any other case, argue in the same way, and in respect to anything which we naturally suppose, but the existence of which could not account for our impressions, maintain

their truth, and say: it is a mystery. For example, why not so meet the argument that the stars cannot be little white flames? Why not say: they are so, but we must not ask how we can perceive them so far off? Were not that as reasonable as to say, that nature *is* an inert existence, as it is to our impression; and when it is argued that an inert existence could not cause us to perceive, reply: we must not ask such questions; that is sacred? Plainly we are on the wrong path here. Whatever may be the truth, this idea of a matter-substratum has had its day. No-theory of the world, a candid confession that we cannot account for our experience at all, would at least be better than that. Better positively: it would be truthful, genuine, manful; the attitude which a genuine man naturally takes towards that which he does not understand:—infinitely better negatively, for it would leave the path open for a more humble and more hopeful way of attempting the solution. I see no one purpose that the matter hypothesis answers, but that of puffing us up with a vain conceit of knowing all about the world, and preventing us from investigating. That matter-world has just solidity enough to block up our way, and no more. Suppose we had to eat "matter" instead of meat, or sit on "matter" instead of chairs, we should find it unsolid enough then I fear.

R. That were Berkeley's theory realized:—men living in a world that is an idea. The very thought of such an entertainment gives a foretaste of emptiness, and a feeling that recalls Satan's fall through chaos.

In such case we should be thankful even for the cloud whose presence there we have so much cause to rue. In truth, there always was something ludicrous to an imagination not duly broken in to reverence, in that *substratum* which was, and was not, what we see and touch, and had to be at once distinguished from, and identified with, all things; in which all that we properly perceive inheres, "stuck in it," as Coleridge says, "like pins in a pincushion." In fact it is on an emptiness that the notion of matter is based; reminding us of the man who pored in vain over the cane-bottomed chair to think, "who could have taken all those holes and put the cane around them?" But are we not acting rather like the savage, who begins to kick his idol when he has discovered that it is not a god after all? If matter play little part in nature, it has played a great part in human thought.

W. True. That necessary inference, or belief, of matter brings home to man a proof, from which he cannot escape, of what he is. Be the truth of nature what it may, it has been necessary *to him* to infer an inert, a dead substratum; he has necessarily ascribed to it a being which is itself a denial, an essence which insists on being defined by negatives. To him there is defect in the universe, a void and darkness. He cannot deny that that which he consciously perceives is inert. "Matter" witnesses against him.

R. So you would meet any one who should deny that what we are conscious of perceiving is inert, and thus avoid the conclusion of man's deadness.

W. I should point him to the matter-hypothesis,

and ask: what does it mean that man should have been compelled to infer an universal not-action, and therewith a not-acting substance, in nature?

R. That a man should have been compelled to infer an universal not-light in nature would mean that he was blind.

W. Does it alter the case that all men are included in it?

R. You deny an inert world. Very good. You do not deny that there *is* a world, but that it is inert. Show us then a reason why we feel it as inert when it is not. It is simple enough.

W. So also is the question whether there is matter: it is simply whether man has been mistaken in thinking the world inert; whether he has erred in interpreting his impressions? We have given up, as not pertaining to that which *exists*, every property that we are conscious of perceiving, except *shape*. Yet what reason is there for retaining that, or what advantage in doing so? Something different from colour, sound, temperature, odour, causes us to perceive all these things; then why not something different from shape cause us to perceive shape? or something different from hardness cause us to perceive hardness? Why should not our thoughts be raised to a consistency among themselves? Why inharmonious laws to regulate our perception? especially when we know so well that shape is not always perceived as it is, but varies continually. If we are caused to perceive a certain shape by that which is different in shape, why may we not be caused to perceive shape alto-

gether by something different? And as for resistance, the feeling of hardness is evidently dependent upon conditions of ourselves.

R. Few things would be hard to us, if our fingers were of sharpened steel, and our muscles iron and steam. And again, it has been well remarked that if our fingers were magnetic, and a central point between them were of like magnetic character so as to repel them, our feeling must be the same as in grasping an elastic body.

W. In short, we ought to have outgrown the assumption that the cause of our impressions is something corresponding to them. It could not be so, and ought not: if it were, how could we obtain a knowledge of ourselves? We deprive our consciousness of more than half its value by maintaining the existence of that which corresponds to it. We rob it of its power to indicate, by its modifications, our own condition. God gives us in our consciousness an opportunity of learning two things:—that which exists, and our own state: we would indolently assume the former, and ignore the latter. But in repudiating the one, we fail also of the other. For, not caring to inquire what in our own condition *modifies* our consciousness, we merely delude ourselves with the persuasion that we know what *causes* it.

R. But physical things have a certain reality. You must not deny this. You must reconcile your idea with the feelings of mankind, or it is not yet perfect.

W. I agree with you. But I think the reconciliation is already effected. I affirm, in the true sense,

the reality of these things that we perceive: for how does it make a thing less real to us, to know that the cause of our perceiving it is something not corresponding to that which we are conscious of? Is fire less *hot*, or are leaves less *green*, because we hold that we are caused to perceive heat and colour by something wholly unlike them? Are heat and light therefore less real? Why then should fire or leaves be less real, if we are caused to perceive them by something different? We are made to perceive physical things by a true actual Existence apart from us, of which they give us sure demonstration. This is what men affirm: there is some true existence acting upon me to make me perceive, and through my perceiving I can be sure it IS.

R. Since that which truly acts upon us, to make us perceive, is by common consent above our comprehension, evidently it follows that what we are conscious of, or do comprehend, is not that very existence itself, but is a phenomenon. Now, if we ask respecting a phenomenon whether it exists, in the sense of truly and absolutely existing, evidently it does not: such existence is not an appropriate idea to apply to it. It exists as a phenomenon; it has all the existence which belongs to its nature, but its nature is such that true existence could only be absurdly spoken of in relation to it: that would contradict our own definition. But that which we thus know to be but phenomenal is real to our experience, thus proving defect in man: a defect to recognize which, and trace its effects, is the key to

human life. Our error has been of the kind called, by writers on logic, that of *mal-observation.* All the circumstances belonging to the case have not been taken into account; regard not having been paid to man's own condition in interpreting his consciousness. This is your view.

W. And what do you say to it?

R. I accept it. It is but applying to the whole experience of man the same rules that we apply to our own experience as individuals; so giving consistency to our thoughts, and introducing unity into our mental life. The only thing that appears to make it difficult is the novelty. One is apt to imagine, on the first hearing, that the existence of things is called in question; or that you deny the reality of that which makes us perceive. When it becomes clear that our perception, and the certain existence of a reality which is its cause and object, is the basis of the entire argument as it is in the ordinary view, only with a reference to our own condition which that view ignores or omits; then there is no more difficulty. We ask ourselves as before: Why do we perceive these things? and we answer—not, as before, the action on us of things corresponding to the impressions we are immediately conscious of—but the action of things more excellent than they, which impress us as they do by virtue of man's condition. We do herein only what we have only all our lives been learning to do, and are accustomed to do in every single case. We are no more at a loss to think how any particular object which we perceive should not truly exist as

such an object, than we are to remember that the bright spot we see as Venus does not exist as such a spot. That which exists is different: but these objects are to man's perception. Their relative existence remains the same: it is not as if we left all the other specks in the heavens as existing, and denied one of them; but we affirm of each one that, in truth, it is part of a whole which is different from that of which we have the impression. When a person looks at the stars at night, he would not deny that there are specks in the heavens. Those specks have the existence which belongs to them. They exist to our sense. But if we ask what is the true existence indicated by them, that is another question: we must take into consideration man's condition, his present mode of being.

W. Exactly so. Thus "matter" is not the unknown existence of nature, but the known phenomenon. It is that which is to us; having the subjective element in it, as the metaphysicians say; which is, simply enough, defect. Not that we have truly added anything, but that we have not adequately apprehended.

R. You mean that the idea of matter is the attempt to conceive an existence, or substance, corresponding to a defective apprehension of that which exists: necessarily, therefore, a defective substance; necessarily, therefore, a cause of perplexity, to be escaped from only by remembering that our apprehension *is* defective, and that there is not anything corresponding to it, but only something excelling it. For matter,

being a substance answering to our inadequate apprehension, necessarily is insufficient, not equal to that which nature is. Thus we have had to suppose also those marvellous powers in ourselves, which convert mere material and mechanical processes into our exquisite sensations. We have had to supplement the palpable insufficiency of the substance we have supposed for nature, by gifts of our own. And the whole is a mystery not to be inquired into. I begin to share your impatience with that plan, not of cutting, but of tying knots. For who is to judge what mysteries are to be allowed, and what are not? What scheme of false assumption might not shelter itself under the same claim?

W. We need never take this position, of predicting the future direction of human thought, if we will allow that our way of regarding its problems may not be perfect. We may safely say of certain questions that they cannot be answered; but we can never say that they may not be found to be mistaken questions, and the true problems at issue solved another way. To take this very case of our sensations as an instance: doubtless, no man will ever be able to say how matter and motion can make us perceive light; but it may be possible for men, hereafter, to say why our perceiving light made us necessarily infer matter and motion; and also to discover what is the true cause of our perceiving light. The recognition of a defective feeling on man's part already gives a partial answer to the former question; the latter waits. We find an insoluble mystery here, only because we

assume as certain that the operation of matter is the cause of our perceiving light. We put an inference, necessary to us in ignorance, as if it were a thing ascertained and known. In a word, we deal by the phenomenal as if it were the absolute.

R. Let me continue. We know as a fact that men sometimes feel that to be which is not. We do so in dreams. Nay, in every case of insufficient knowledge, in which we are deceived by appearances, the same thing may be said. Every one who has an inaccurate impression respecting things around him may be said, in some sense, to feel that to be which is not. Defect on our part has a false feeling for its necessary consequence. Not mere absence of right apprehension, but positive wrong apprehension, is the necessary result of want of a true appreciation of that with which we have to do. Feeling that to be which is not, is a familiar and well known fact in human experience. It is natural to the present state of man ; a normal part of his present training. What more reasonable than that it should afford the explanation of this larger experience, which we call the perception of the material world ? Man feels that to be which is not : necessarily and rightly feels so, by reason of defect. It is his work to learn and to escape from the error. All his work in gaining knowledge is this same process. A familiar fact of our experience gives the key to man's feelings in respect to the physical world ; a known and natural circumstance, proved in ordinary life, applied to a larger problem. So weight, the familiar heaviness of bodies on the

earth, gives the solution of the gravitation of the spheres. And the known defect of man gives evidence that it must be so. A defective being *ought* to feel that to be which is not; else were all the intellectual laws confounded.

Admitting then that in his feeling of this physical (phenomenal) world, man feels that to be which is not, are not many things made clear? Are not those intricate questions respecting the absolute and the phenomenal, the temporal and eternal, the realities of the spiritual and the shows and forms of earth, stripped of their darkness? The difference is between that which is felt by man to be, and that which IS.

W. Have we not continually to deal with children on this same principle, teaching them to distinguish between the truth of things, and that which they feel to be? My little boy said to me the other day: "Papa, the lamp jumps when I jump." To him there was a jumping lamp, as to us there is a material world. Jumping-ness in the lamp was as much a necessary inference to him, as materialness in the world has been to us. He had not learnt to understand that the mode in which we are impressed by things depends upon our own condition. Nor have we yet applied this dearly bought knowledge to the aggregate of man's experience. We puzzle ourselves about the *material* world:—how it can be, what it is, how we can perceive it, how we can harmonize it with our belief respecting God and spiritual things, how we can reconcile its existence, and the things that take

place in it, with that which is known in the conscience and the heart:—we strive over this problem just as a child might do, who should strive to reconcile a jumping lamp with the little he might know of physics. We should say to him: O child, the lamp is not jumping as it is to you; think of yourself. So we should say to man: O man, the world is not material, not dead, as it is to you; think of yourself.

R. Applying one law to the individual and to the race; not thinking that there is a sudden break and disharmony between our experience as individuals and that of man as man. The universality of human experience—that all men perceive in the same way—shows that a common cause is acting upon them, and that they are partakers of a common nature and condition. But what it is that acts on them they must learn by the joint study at once of what they perceive, and what their own nature and condition are.

W. And think of those anomalies in our philosophy; dreams and illusions of the sense. If man's experience be as we have said, then dreams are natural, and might have been foretold; they are aids to our thought. Consider how utterly they overthrow the argument from our consciousness or unavoidable conviction, for true existence in the objects of sense. For at any given moment we have this firm conviction of the reality of perceived things, which is supposed to prove their existence. But let us imagine that the next minute we have the sensation of waking up from sleep, followed by a consciousness as of different things around us. Should we then think of affirming

the reality of those things which we before felt ourselves as perceiving? Should we not say at once and unhesitatingly: I had a dream? There is no possible evidence of a sense which would not, under these circumstances, be set down to dreaming. But how can that be valid evidence which can thus become invalid? Does not the existence of dreams utterly overthrow the pretence of such authority in our convictions? There are the convictions without the authority; and occurring in such a way that we must own our convictions might at any moment be shown to be unathoritative by a change in our sensations.

But again: think how beautifully dreams and illusions illustrate the problem of physical perception. What are they but states of feeling in us, which we irresistibly refer at first to objects which exist only to our feeling, and attribute to causes which have not *being* enough to cause them? We learn afterwards to look for the true cause in other things. Why cannot we interpret man's experience in physical perception, as we have learnt to interpret dreams? Are we any losers, any the less prepared to act wisely and truly, because we understand that the things we are conscious of in dreams do not truly, but only to our feeling, cause our consciousness? This perception of a dead world, of a world that cannot BE, that lands us in utter doubt when we investigate it, what should it mean but that man has consciousness produced by some true causes, but which he feels as if produced by others, and refers to others which have not *being* enough to cause it? The feeling these physical things

to be realities is not the true waking life of Man, even as feeling dreams realities is not the individual's true waking life. Man walketh in a vain show. All are included in it; having a consciousness truly produced by one cause, and referring it to others which are unreal. It is a known case, and no hypothesis.

But we may go farther. Only in dreams and illusions have we any means of getting behind our consciousness, as it were, of testing it, and ascertaining its true nature and relation to the things consciously perceived. And in this case we find that something different from the objects of our conscious perception is the cause of our perceiving them. Should we not think that the law of our perception is given us in this? especially since it is confirmed by an analogous experience so wide, and a necessity in the nature of things so demonstrable. In dreams, or other illusions, our conscious perception of inert things, being transient and limited to the individual, can be analyzed and its nature demonstrated. But that great consciousness which includes all men cannot be so treated, whatever its cause may be, it does not, in our present experience, cease its operation; and it is not limited to one or a few, so as to be tested by others. Of its nature we must judge in a different way: not by direct experience, but by evidence and proof. Dreams are, in relation to the universal conscious perception, as the perception of motion in particular objects, through our own individual motion, is to the universal perception of motion in the heavens. In respect to the latter, men have no means of experimentally

testing their consciousness; it is the same for all and at all times; but the particular and transient motions of individuals give them the means of interpreting it as due to a state affecting all men. So do our particular and transient preceptions of physical things in dreams, wherein we know that the true cause is different from that which is consciously present to us, give us the means of interpreting the universal perception of physical things, as due to a different cause operative upon all.

Yet farther: in dreams and such illusions, evidence is given that the workings of man's own structure, so to speak, may cause him to have conscious feeling of physical things around him. This is a result to which the internal mechanism works independently of the cause which puts it into operation. So the mad or intoxicated man, by the state of his own body, is consciously surrounded by, and feels every way as reality, an entire world of his own. We, looking on, perceive that his true surroundings are wholly different from those which he feels, and of the non-reality of which no reasoning, no demonstration, could persuade him. How can we be sure Man is not dreaming? not delirious? Does not every language affirm him so? Do not his actions bespeak it? Does he not evidently act by the world not according to its nature, and fail; though to his own feeling he seems all right? Above all does not the divine book tell him in plain words that very thing?

R. Disease, which is in respect to the individual a defect of life, causes him consciously to perceive, and

feel as acting upon him, things that do not truly exist. Here is the exact parallel to that which you assert of man.

W. Thus dreams and illusions are turned from casting doubt on our belief, into supports of it; from being exceptions, into examples of our experience. I conceive no man ever felt that the world was less real, because of dreams and their explanation. So can no one feel that there is less reality in the world that truly is, because our feeling respecting the world of phenomena may be likened to a dream on the part of man.

R. This however is the practical point. Here is the phenomenon which we perceive, and feel to be—this material world. What then are we to think of that which truly exists, and of ourselves? These questions are two halves, mutually dependent: a true knowledge of that which exists, apart from us, must be gained through a recognition of our own state; a knowledge of ourselves must be gained by investigation of that which we perceive. Surely the means of solving the problem which all man's instincts prompt him to attempt:—what is the very truth of things? are thus placed in his hands. And when, on examination, it is found that this which is perceived and felt by man exhibits a character of defectiveness—a defectiveness recognized at once by the intellect in science, and by the heart in religion—do we need any other evidence that such defectiveness must be the appearance due to man's imperfect appreciation? Or, if other evidence were needed, is it not more than suffi-

ciently supplied by the reasonings which have demonstrated that this defective world, that is felt by us, cannot be that which truly exists; disproving its existence, and mocking us either with an *idea* for a world, or with the offer of believing in a world as existing which yet we must grant can be disproved, try to maintain it as we will? How can we accept either of these alternatives? Must we not say—is it not sufficiently proved—that the defective world, which is felt by us as existing, is not the true world that IS. Should we not gladly take the defectiveness for our own, that our Universe may be no more defective; and that its existence may be made capable of true demonstration, not resting on the more than doubtful accuracy of our impressions?

W. But what should you say, if you were met by the argument that we cannot know anything about what truly acts on us, but that man can only know phenomena, and must confine his attention to them: that all other attempts must be vain?

R. I should say, that was a vain argument, being an *à priori* one on a subject which must be studied experimentally.

W. But if it were replied, that the attempt has been made, and has failed, and that it is proved that man can only know phenomena?

R. Then I should say: I will try again upon another plan. I will take into account man's own state as influencing his perceptions; I will remember his proved defect. Acting thus, according to reason and experience, perhaps the result may be different.

W. Suppose you were told that it is merely a matter of words to say that the absolute is spiritual; and that, although it is proved not to be inert as the phenomenon is, it is still unknown as much as before.

R. I should say that it is not so: that true action combined with unchangingness, true action and yet necessary, true action yet in absolute fulfilment of law—that this is as much known to be holiness as anything can be known at all. I know that if the necessity in nature only seem to be inertness, then it is truly rightness. But I cannot believe that any one will use this argument against you. You are not opposed to those who have maintained this position respecting the sphere of human knowledge. To me you seem entirely to embrace and affirm their position; and to carry out to the legitimate conclusion their own premises.

W. If I understand them rightly, I do so. The true positivist doctrine surely is, that man could only know the Absolute by knowing himself, so as to exclude the subjective element from that which he perceives. No one, so far as I am aware, has adduced any argument to show that this cannot be done. No one can have any unwillingness that it should be done. Towards this result I seek to take one step; as it seems to me the first, and one essential to any farther advance in that direction. It is very simple. One part of the subjective, or human, element in the phenomenon is its defectiveness: the phenomenal differs from the absolute in its inertness. Surely it is a truism?

R. A truism?

W. Yes, a truism. Do you think I thereby diminish its value? I think, on the contrary, that overlooked or forgotten truisms are among the most important of all things. What is geometry but truisms applied? The certainty of knowledge seems to me to rest upon its being capable of analysis into truisms.

R. Let us not diverge from the subject. Show me the application of yours.

W. Thus. The absolute essence of nature, that which IS, is not inert: the phenomenon, or that which is to man's consciousness, is inert. Therefore man introduces inertness into nature.

R. The whole thing is contained in that. If the true being of nature cannot be inert, then the inertness which characterizes it to man's consciousness must be due to his own state; and the foundation of the doctrine of man's deadness seems firmly laid. To deny nature to be inert is to affirm deadness in man. Upon that link the entire chain hangs — whether that which is the true being of nature can be inert, as that which we are conscious of perceiving is.

W. Can it?

R. It seems to me that it cannot be so. If there is any certainty at all, these two propositions surely possess it. First, that the true existence which acts on us does act: and, secondly, that if we do not know this true existence, then that which we do know cannot act, because it is not that which IS.

W. If then, we know the absolute in nature to be

not inert, is not that some knowledge respecting it? Is it not a beginning of knowledge? And if, in attempting to learn the absolute from the phenomenal, we have to remember a deadness in man, may we not begin the investigation with some guidance, with some hope?

R. I do not think any consistent positivist would oppose you there. He would feel that you do not deny his position, but take it as your starting point. His doctrine is: Let us attend to these phenomenal things till we have better means of knowing. Not affirming, or denying, of the future; but waiting humbly and hopefully for whatever that future may bring.

W. In that I would be one with him. And also in treating all things with regard to the progress of humanity. The true charm of that system is in its subordinating all private interests to the welfare of man, and treating all material things as of no value in and for themselves, calling them phenomenal. The world has vast obligations to Auguste Comte, not the least of which is his scientific demonstration of the authority of the moral over the merely intellectual. And has not that man a title to our love, who does not shrink from ridicule in advocating, according to his best thought, the claims of the affections?

R. It is evident that to regard physical things as only phenomena and treat the intellect as dealing only with the relative, enthrones the moral at once in indisputable supremacy. That doctrine, in whatever form propounded, must be fundamentally ethical. If

it be not so, it is nothing—a science merely of dreams. Of necessity it concentrates its regard upon the spiritual (for positivism does not disown the word), and upon the spiritual in its bearing on man.

W. Has it not struck you that my practical conclusion is identical, essentially, with that of the positivist? Regard in all things man's raising up:—from his dead state, I say (feeling the words of the New Testament to be the exact words I want)—from his imperfection, says the positivist. I do not shrink from owning the oneness, I rejoice in it.

R. You should do so.

W. And I have larger grounds for being glad. Is there any class of thinking men whom I oppose? Do I not truly agree with all?

R. That has been held impossible. Yet ways of doing such impossibilities may be found.

W. To believe the felt inertness to be due to man is one. That shall set you free from all necessity of contradiction. Once deny that the Universe is truly dead as man feels it, and you need deny no more. For what is there that man affirms that you do not also affirm? to what conviction of his heart, or intellect, or conscience, to what aspiration of his nature, need you turn any longer a deaf ear? Is not the whole course of human thought just that which, on such premises, it should have been? Are not all its averments embraced alike; none rejected, none scorned, but each, with tenderness and reverence, receiving its due weight and honour? Does not the mental life of man point to this issue, claim this

victory? Do not extremes meet here? the most rigid logic and the largest love, the steadiest grasp upon experience and the highest raptures of enthusiasm? Is it not the making one of doubt and faith? the giving up of all that is not proved, and the holding fast of all that is to be desired?

R. Do you mean to say it unites opposite doctrines, Positivism for example, and spiritual religion?

W. It unites them, if to unite is to show that they must be one. The "unknown absolute" of the positivist is the "spiritual" of the theologian. There is no contradiction between them. The assertion on the one side, and the admission on the other, that that which is consciously perceived (the physical) is phenomenon only, breaks down the wall of partition. These are two halves which wait a predestined union. If this world be but phenomenon, of what is it the phenomenon but of that spiritual world which our consciences attest? If there be a spiritual world present to us, operative upon us, what does it make us consciously perceive? What is the phenomenon of it, but this physical world, which is known to be the phenomenon of some existence different from itself? Who should forbid the consummation upon earth of a bridal so long prepared in heaven? For what is needed but the opening, on each side, of a narrowed heart and niggard hand? Accept the result of examination of the world, which says this known physical is not a true existence but an appearance of some other; accept the conscience, which affirms another existence different from the physical; recog-

nize the known defect of man, which must cause the phenomenon of which he is conscious to differ by defect from that which is: and what remains to do?

R. Here, you would say, is a known phenomenon (the physical) inertly necessary, which lacks an absolute; and here, a known absolute (the spiritual) actively necessary, or holy, which lacks a phenomenon. To recognize man's deadness, which makes the active inert to him, brings them into one.

W. And the theologian, however real he may assert this physical to be, holds that it has only an inferior mode of existence to that of the other world which he affirms. This inferior mode of existence the positivist defines, showing it to be phenomenal; that is, an apparent existence only, due to the action on us of a true existence which is different. And both agree that what the common instinct of mankind affirms is this inferior existence of the physical, and no more.

R. It is clear that positivism necessarily asserts the existence of another world than this that we call the physical. That lies at the basis of its entire doctrine. If it were not so, whatever the things we know might be they could not be "phenomena."

W. The strife is at an end. The opposites refuse any more to be opposed; they have gravitated into one. The strong attraction of mutual helpfulness and need has overborne prejudice and caprice. Each in the other recognizes its second self; the twain have become one, the unknown want interpreting itself in its fulfilment. So youth and maiden dwell in solitude,

or meet with jealous pride, until each finds that their want is the other. For does not positivism lay avowed constraint on certain tendencies in man, and bid him hold his longings under rigid check? Does not piety acknowledge not less restraint; confess too often an opposedness in earthly things, distraction rather than help from daily life, a necessity to check the current of spontaneous thought, and leave some inquiries unpursued? Each gives the other liberty. The positivist receives a known for his unknown absolute, on which his pent-up thought may expatiate in freedom; the man of piety casts off the weight of a world of realities opposed to godliness. This world has become the very sphere of godliness, the nourisher and upholder of his piety, the present proof and evidence of things not seen. To know the physical to be the phenomenon of the spiritual makes Christianity and science one.

And again, are not the idealist and the asserters of common sense made one? With the former, we admit that sensible things, being phenomena, can exist only in a mind: with the latter, we affirm an absolute existence (not in a mind), as being that which is the true cause and object of perception. We do but carry out and complete that position, excluding from that of which the existence is affirmed the qualities which are made to appear in it by the laws of man's perception. As they exclude colour, for example, so do we exclude inertness: as they say that which exists is not itself coloured, but has the power of causing man to perceive a coloured object,

so do we say that which exists is not itself inert, but has the power of causing man to perceive an inert object: we recognise that another perceived quality does not belong to that which exists. We are wholly of the school of common sense; yet give our hand to its ancient foe, and claim him as an ally; for when we add inertness to the list of subjective qualities, nature expands and rises so, that we need his aid to grasp the overwhelming truth. Those also we agree with, who affirm that the reason we perceive material things in time and space is, that they are in time and space. That is true. The phenomena are in time and space, and must be so perceived if perceived as they are. For time and space may well be called *conditions of the phenomenal:* they belong to it, characterize it, are inseparable from it. And he to whom phenomena are realities must be in time and space. He only can be not so, to whom phenomena are but phenomena, and not realities. So we do not oppose those who have affirmed that space and time belong not to that which truly IS, but are conditions only of that which is to us. And with those also we agree, who maintain that our faculties must be trustworthy, and that man "is not a phantom in a world of phantoms." He is not. He is a defective being, to whose apprehension and feeling things are not as they truly are; a being wanting in life amid a living world. And his faculties are exactly what they should be; they teach him this very thing in the best and rightest way. And finally, we must not forget how many men will tell us that we might have spared our proofs that the world is

truly spiritual: how many hold that to be self-evident, and treat with scorn the notion of a dead substratum. To these also we tender our allegiance, and confess them right; yet plead that there is another rightness too; that a deadness is perceived by man, and that a dead substance must have been inferred.

R. You would make me believe, in spite of myself, that I agree with every one, and that men have not really gone wrong in thinking so diversely as they have. One unrectified mistake has necessitated all; and all contribute their part to the solution. But do you leave no scope at all for the warlike instincts of our nature, nothing for us verily to oppose, and to put down?

W. There is no fear: scope shall not fail for impulse to strife: nor absence of an enemy baulk the expectant arm. Our zeal may burn against the self in us. Against that foe we may wage a warfare wherein victory will be true victory; a fight that is verily for LIFE.

R. That is true, if self be our defect; for then to have self cast out from us is truly to have life bestowed. But it must be done for us. How can the self cast out the self? How can Satan cast out Satan? Our willingness and our exertion, these must be the grace of God within us. We labour, yet not we. But speaking of our self, it interests me to bring this view of it into connexion with Professor Ferrier's admirable book: *On Being and Knowing*, in which he argues so powerfully that in all our perception the

self enters as an element, and that, apart from the self, the objects we are conscious of cannot exist, being indeed constituted of the union of self and object. Take the self as defect, a negative element, and this view is the same as yours; a negative element introduced into nature by man's state of being. Thus too the phenomenon is reality to the self.

W. I feel it a great confirmation. If this self be man's defect of being, and his self-consciousness be consciousness of defect, how wide a harmony is in the present, how bright a prospect in the future. All this life is to cast out self from man; to raise him from a consciousness of death to a true living consciousness. To this end all things work, the evil and the good. Thus working, all things are to God's glory: the glory of His giving life to man.

R. To accept the self of which we are conscious as the opposite to being, would make clear many problems. How simple, then, that this state is one of deadness; how simple that sin should follow: that God is leading the world aright through this dark labyrinth. How simple that we should have been deceived by a false feeling, and find as it were opposing lives within; a self-life, which is truly death, and a true human life, the gift of God. How simple that our best plans and purposes, based on the self, should fail; that all contrivances which treat this self as if it were man's being should come to nought: that reason should seem to be baffled here, and man's best judgment leave but a darker mystery, as his best efforts have so often left but deeper evil.

W. We have taken a self view of the world and of all things, and it will not do. How could the universe be truly good and clear to MAN, if it were not dark and evil to his present self? The mystery and the misery to man, as he is now, are pledge and proof of the goodness which, when there is no more death in him, he shall know to be, and ever to have been: of the joy that he shall feel when Life is perfect in him, and in love alone is joy. If we could but open our eyes to see all as it truly is, not as it is to self, heaven were already before us. For is it not a privilege of heaven to be so utterly given up to God, so filled with the feeling of His absolute goodness, and His absolute control, that the gladness of the joy that is in Him rises ever to the fulness of our power to rejoice: leaves us no time nor heart to think of self, nor care for it, because our soul is wholly filled with Him?

DIALOGUE IV.

R. IN recognizing self as defect, the question of "existence" ceases to be a mere speculation; it becomes spiritual, and links itself with our deepest feelings. To BE is to cast out self. The moral and spiritual laws are primary: Man's true being and his sacrifice of self are one. Life can only be affirmed where there is holiness. Self-will must be called death: it *is* so.

W. It is most true. Being and holiness are inseparable, for Being is spiritual. That abstract conception, which passes in our intellect for "being," is not the true being. That is a notion merely, and has arisen only through our feeling the phenomenal as real. There is no such inert existence: it can only seem. BEING is a word of infinite meaning, which refuses to be thought. It carries holiness with it. We are conscious of being evil because we are conscious of death. Perhaps a good thought, for us, is that being is the opposite of the self of which we are conscious; and from which the evil comes. But to see truly what it is to BE, I know of but one object on which to fix my eye: on Him I look, who reveals to us God.

R. In Him was Life.

W. And the Life is the Light of men: the light wherein we see what BEING is. It should not seem a strange thing that when God reveals himself to us it is as a sacrifice. If we had had Life within us, we should have known that it could be only so: that there is no other way in which Life can be shown to such a self as ours; even as light can be revealed in darkness only as its destruction. To self, BEING is sacrifice.

R. Because 'tis Love. God is not a substance with "powers" inhering in it, such as all the things we conceive must be. Surely that is spiritual which is Love, in the sense in which God is Love: unthinkable.

W. Say rather, that IS. For that alone is active. Action and love are one: how can action be except in giving; in the outflowing of the life and power within? To us, who have this consciousness of self, action must be the giving up of self.

R. So our only true action is in self-sacrifice, in holiness. That is to be truly man. This might be your answer, if it should be urged that man is not *only* defective, but that there is in him positive wickedness.

W. I affirm that also. The two affirmations are truly one. We need only to understand that being is not to be thought; that being is holy; then is defect, or deadness, also unholiness, the opposite to love. When we are speaking of that which truly is, and not merely of that which is felt by us to be but is

not, "being" is a word of spiritual meaning. And defect is self: it brings the sin which is in self-assertion.

R. Sin is involved in the affirmation of deadness, because Life is not a mere passive state, but is holiness?

W. Even so: only that which is but phenomenal is passive.

R. The essential point appears to be the admitted doctrine, that that which IS—or BEING—does not correspond to that which we conceive: or, in other words, that being cannot be thought. We must, therefore, admit it above thought, and recognize in our necessary modes of thinking indications of our own state, not rules by which we may judge of that which IS.

W. The rule I would suggest is very simple, That which exists causes man to be intellectually impressed in certain ways, which depend partly on *its* nature, partly on *his* condition. There is, therefore, no authority in man's intellectual impressions (his necessary, or logical, thoughts) in respect to that which exists: but the problem we have to solve is, in every case, to show how that which exists should cause such thought in man, his own condition being ascertained and allowed for. One application of this principle I have argued for, in respect to our necessary conception of nature as inert: but doubtless it has many others. The intellect is subordinate to the conscience: that which the moral sense affirms, tested and corrected by the intellect as the intellect is by sense, is really true for man; is that which we may

rely upon, which will not betray and deceive. And I venture to feel sure, that that which is really true for Man is also really, and absolutely, true. If man have his true Being then he is a standard of Being. He is not so now through his defect, because of the nature of the self that is in him.

R. Man's instinct that he can judge of Being, can measure existence by his own standard, is not in itself a mistaken one; it is vitiated only by his unrecognized defect?

W. That is what I mean. His self—a negation—is mixed with everything he thinks; and thereby his thoughts are falsified. His feeling, that things are and must be as they are to him, is a feeling which rightly pertains to him as man, and will be justified when his deadness is done away.

R. Then things will be to him as they are; and the assertion, "this must be as it is to us," or, "this that is to my consciousness must BE;" will not any more be false. That it is false now proves this not the true human life—not the LIFE of man.

W. Thus it is that the assertion of man's immediate knowledge of the spiritual, of his direct intuition of divine things, fails to gain the assent of men. It is true of man only in his perfect state. Like the assertion of man's freedom, it applies to a manhood which is yet to be completed.

R. Can this be the heresy of those who said "that the Resurrection is already past?" affirming that man has already his true life, is already raised up from his dead state, while this self is yet in him?

W. Does it not seem natural? What other "Resurrection" could be supposed already past?

R. Can it be that the writers of the New Testament speak of the Resurrection of the dead in this sense?

W. I wish you would examine. In the meantime, observe how a defect in man explains the apparent inconsistency of telling men not to regard that as real which yet is real to them: it shows, not only that we may, but that we must, rise above that which has been called the human point of view: that is the self point of view, which is emphatically not the human. That which is to the self, to the Man is not; and for manhood must be treated so. To say: "This is to me" does not settle the question; we must analyze this "me."

R. Thus when the things which are real to the self, wealth, comfort, honour, all material and intellectual things, are set aside and disregarded, treated as nought, for right or love, then we behold manhood. Then we see men treat things as they are. Those are the heroes, to whom all eyes turn with love, at whose name every heart beats higher. They show to man his manhood, and he recognizes it with reverence and joy.

W. They bear witness of the life; but the Power that can make us live must come from a higher than they. He in whom The Son of Man was revealed, who shows us God in very deed, and makes clear this tangled web of earthly life; He who has borne the world's sins, and taken away its guilt; He only, and

the Spirit that proceeds from Him and from His Father, is the Lord and Giver of Life.

R. It is no wonder that the world has clung so to His memory; that no abuses practised in His name, nor subtleness of reasoning, could loose the impassioned grasp with which a despairing world holds His Divinity.

W. Nor that bad arguments have been used to justify a faith which could not be renounced.

R. It is not a question of argument or proof. Christ shows us God. The sight eclipses all glories else, and constrains our dazzled eyes. Many things we know and love; but when we think of God we think of Jesus.

W. Of Jesus the Redeemer, who makes us know we have not life, and gives it. And so explains all things to us, and reveals creation's secret.

R. We find it difficult to admit a state of consciousness to be one of death. Yet it is not quite natural? What death is surely depends on what life is. If life is conscious life, ought not death to be conscious death? If life involves holiness, ought not death to involve sinfulness? Why should not the only possible opposite to life involve such consciousness of self as ours? Whether things are, or are not, as man feels them, depends on whether there is something wrong with respect to him.

W. Each of us may answer that question for himself.

R. In reference to the ideas now entertained of nature, are we not in the position of maintaining the

existence of that which is to thought, while yet we assert that that which exists cannot be thought; asserting, as it were, an inconceivable in that which we conceive?

W. I think this is exactly our embarrassment. We have learnt that the true existence of nature cannot be conceived, yet we cannot give up the existence of that which we conceive. We are thus involved in an obvious contradiction, unless we are content to say that we have not any true knowledge at all, and so give up religion. But is not the reason evident? We ought to come to this difficulty; it is the very thing that compels us to recognize man's deadness:—his realities are not real. For 'tis certain that the things we think are real to us.

R. Our life is a life in phenomena: admit it not man's true life—our self as not man's being—and all is clear.

W. Otherwise only impenetrable confusion, which all attempts to clear up make only the more manifest. But how simple the solution is: it is only to remember that there is defect in man.

R. I have observed the extreme obviousness and simplicity of that which you lay as the foundation. It seems strange that so much should come from merely taking into account, in our thoughts, a fact which we never think of denying.

W. But it is perfectly natural that it should be so. What we do, thereby, is to take another point of view, and all things of course look different.

R. You do but say, also, that there is only one

UNIVERSE, in which you cannot be held to affirm a novelty. The word itself proves that some men have been of your opinion.

W. It is man's native opinion; nor do I know a stronger presumption in favour of any view, than that it shows the hidden truthfulness of words, bringing more clearly to men's thought what they have been unconsciously affirming. Men are only compelled to say there is more than one universe, because they think this universe truly is inert, dead, bad, as they feel it.

R. You come to the old point again: consider *yourself*.

W. How can I leave it, when it gives me such light and joy, such deliverance from bondage to my own impressions? But I was about to observe, that in that which we think, or conceive, man's defect is especially evident: there his self is brought into clear relief. So that our plan, of trying to hold, as existing, that which answers to our *conceptions*, is in some respects the worst of all. It would be, in some sense, better to affirm the existence of that which is to our sensation; of the light and sound, *e.g.*, which our senses feel, rather than of the motion which our thoughts conceive. And we should surely have as good ground for the one as for the other; wholly subjective as both are.

R. Motion itself, of course, is merely a matter of sensuous perception, as much as light or warmth. We do but substitute an idea derived from one mode of sensuous impression for other similar impressions

We have not anything less subjective in motion than in music.

W. I think not. I did not mean to pay you so ill a compliment as to suppose you unaware of this. But has it never struck you, how the life and being of things are turned out of them by our attempts to grasp them in thought? Take the case of nature, for example: this glorious world, which fills us with such emotions, is such a wonderful existence. We try to think it, to bring it before us in orderly conceptions, to present it clearly to our minds:—What has happened? what mystery, what inverted miracle, what miserable abortion is here? Where has NATURE disappeared, leaving nothing in our thoughts but that *caput mortuum* of matter and motion? But this result is what should be: we were trying to think BEING. Again: take holiness or virtue. Think it: and what is left? a scheme for the greatest good of the greatest number, perhaps. Or yet again: what word fills us with such a feeling of awe, with such a consciousness of the presence of unspeakable EXISTENCE, as the word Eternal? But when we think it, or try to put it into conceptions, what have we? Nothing but duration without limits, time that does not end; no Existence at all, but a mode only, and one which must be defined by negatives.—Why should we perplex ourselves so vainly? Do we not know that we cannot think that which IS?

R. We discover that we cannot, by feeling that it escapes us when we try.

W. Then by what we are obliged to think we

know ourselves. Our being such as we are makes the eternal, to our thought, nothing but an everlasting emptiness. But in truth we know the eternal better, even as we know nature better, and holiness better. When love is perfect, and drives away every thought but of the object loved, all reference to reward, all regard to anything to be obtained; when the soul is wholly satisfied in self-surrender, this *now* of utter and final loss being enough of time; when in love the whole life is gathered up into the moment, and in this present giving, though it be the giving up of all and leaves no future, Life is found; that reveals to us Eternity. That makes us know what the Eternal Life may be, when time is not.

R. But we *must* think of the future, and ask what we shall have. It is our nature.

W. It is. Have we not been told that men are dead? It belongs to this self that is in us to do so.

R. Then we must also ask that question in religion. We must look forward to a future, and consider what *our* lot shall be.

W. True. And the question is answered for us. We shall be made alive: freed from the necessity of asking that question any more.

R. But Christ had respect to the reward set before Him.

W. And what is it, but that of saving man?

R. That also must be ours. We are to enter into the joy of our Lord: that which is Christ's joy also to be ours.

W. Awe and gladness struggle on our tongues.

How should we speak yet how be silent? Heaven grows so beautiful, and so near. It is no more afar off, but now. Now we have Christ's joy, the joy of man's redemption, and our part in it.

R. I see heaven; and at the same time see why earth must be what it is. For if the joy of heaven is in Love, in giving, in the utter sacrifice of all that is to self, then it is also now. Then are we in heaven and know it not, then are we in heaven and turn it into hell.

W. Because we love the self, which God hates.

R. Because we have not life, and do not know. Man would not be so foolish if he knew. If he knew, in very deed, what God is, and what man, and what it is to BE.

W. Therefore does God reveal Himself.

R. He reveals Himself as the bearer of the sins of the world, as the sacrifice for transgression, as the utter giver-up, to be one with whom is wholly to deny the self; to show us, so, the fact of Being. That is what He IS.

W. It is what He IS. All life is revealed to us in that revelation to us of God. Heaven's light has broken through earth's darkness. To live is to bear, to give, to be a willing sacrifice: to be dead—let us not speak of it, it does not need to be described.

R. Love shall never cease. Only our wrong feeling makes this difficult to us. If we could think of ourselves so changed, that what is sacrifice to us should be perfect joy, that loss should be no loss because there would be no wish to gain, that giving

up and sacrificing should be perfect happiness, and nothing else even seem like happiness to us, than we might understand it. Is it that you mean by the self being destroyed?

W. That is it. But remember, we cannot conceive it. Do not try to think it. These are things that man conceives not, but God reveals by His Spirit.

R. So these physical things, which are real to us now and necessitate our self-regard, the conditions which make it impossible for us to conceive that state of absolute self-abnegation, shall be no more real to us. Then man shall not be any more in a physical world, but in the spiritual?

W. I look upon it so. I regard spiritual, and not merely physical, changes as determining the state of man.

R. I am glad our conversation has taken this course; because it has removed, without my expressly stating them, two feelings which were, perhaps, the chief obstacles to my acceptance of your views. The first of these was, that your representation of the work of Christ seemed to exclude the idea of expiation. You dwelt so much upon Christ's revealing God, that it seemed as if you overlooked his sacrificial work.

W. You see that I do not. It is as a sacrifice for us that Christ reveals God.

R. Do you leave the views commonly called evangelical quite untouched?

W. I deny no part of them; but I feel their power

and extent increased. And this in two respects: for while I assert the absolute justice of God, and His punishment of sin by the infliction of suffering, I think more of Christ's saving us from damnation, or from being wicked. And surely this is to make stronger the ground of our love to Him. For is not being wicked a worse thing than suffering? and do we not love a Saviour in proportion to the evil of that from which He sacrifices Himself to save us? We must love Christ more for giving Himself to save us from sin, than from suffering: because it is a worse evil. To put most prominently forward Christ's saving us from suffering, as the ground of love to Him, is to invert the laws of human nature. It is never done in the New Testament.

And again: if Christ by His sacrifice saves the whole world, must we not love him more for that than for saving only a part? It is impossible that our love should not be greater to Christ for saving all men, than for saving ourselves alone, or ourselves and some others only. However much we may love Him as our own Saviour, how can we help loving Him more as the Saviour of the whole world?

R. It increases the power of the evangelical motives to believe the absolute salvation?

W. Infinitely. It renders them unutterably vast; leaving nothing more to be desired, or conceived, of good.

R. But that is only if we see that men are now dead, are now in hell, and damned.

W. True. It demands that we should not banish

the eternal into the future, and should admit that to like sin is worse than to suffer. Surely it is not a large demand.

R. It is not a large demand if we can give up our natural impressions, and admit that they may not be true. But the other feeling, to which I referred as being removed without my stating it, was this: that you had constructed a system of philosophy, and adapted the words of Scripture to it.

W. A jealousy in that respect has ample justification. Try me by the words of Scripture, and see if it be so.

R. I have said that the impression is already removed. Yet it seems strange that if this be true it should be so new.

W. It is not strange.

R. Not strange, I grant, if we look at the history of the world, and the progress of human thought from ignorance to knowledge; but it is strange that the very Gospel should come to us as something new.

W. It does not come as something new.

R. Do not be captious on my words. These thoughts are to us both new and strange.

W. I cannot permit you to say so. Look into your own heart, and tell me again if they be so.

R. If you mean that men have always felt in their hearts that to be sinful is the worst of all things; that the redemption they most need is a redemption from the evil of their own nature; that the eternal things are the realities with which they have now the true concern; this of course is not new.

W. What else should I mean? what else have I been saying? Do not you see that I have but translated the everlasting language of the heart into that of the intellect; that I have only laid aside conceptions of the thought which crushed and overbore the convictions of the man?

R. That certain intellectual notions, unavoidable in our imperfect knowledge, have been fighting against that which we feel to be true, and have made a struggle in our life which may be put to rest by taking a truer intellectual point of view?

W. You have said all. I have nothing to add, except that these intellectual notions have done as much violence to the words of the New Testament as to the Nature of man.

R. Can that be the reason there has been so much difficulty in understanding it, and reconciling its various passages? that it has been so hard to gather a uniform and consistent meaning from the whole?

W. Do not let this question cease to be asked till you have fairly answered it. Meanwhile let me suggest my answer: we have had a philosophy which has prevented us from believing the Gospel.

R. What do you mean by the Gospel?

W. That Christ redeems the world.

R. But men become worse by sinful deeds, become more and more dead to good, and are not saved.

W. I believe the Gospel none the less.

R. But ought we not to see things otherwise, if

it were true that all men shall be drawn to Christ, subdued by Him, in that sense?

W. Ought we to walk by sight or by faith?

R. Do you mean that we must lay aside all these natural feelings, and rest simply upon those declarations?

W. If you claim to believe in Christ, surely you should not find that hard. But if it be, see what helps are given to a feeble faith. Only understand that to redeem man is to alter his Nature and Being, to make him new; and then there is no more any difficulty. Sin exists to this end. Because man *is* wrong, and has to be made right, therefore he sins and goes from worse to worse. How should he be brought to self sacrifice in any other way than by learning how evil his self is?

R. But do all the passages in the New Testament agree with this view?

W. Do they not? Does not the whole book become plain and clear? Does not new light break in upon every part?

R. These are questions not to be answered now. If we could see that the saving of the whole world from a state of death was truly the doctrine of the New Testament, how gladly we should believe it.

W. It must be believed as soon as the opinions which make it seem opposed to the conscience are removed: as soon as we can see that to like sin is infinitely bad, and that the bliss of heaven is in sacrifice of self. The heart of man cries out for it, and refuses to be comforted. And this is the infinite

boon science gives us by proving deadness in man. It is the false opinion of his life, making us think this state his probation, which alone binds our hands from grasping the gift of God, our ears from crediting the glad news of salvation.

R. But if the absolute redemption of man be the truth, why has it been so long unknown, so long rejected?

W. It could not have been otherwise. Had not man to learn nature? had he not to discover the deadness in himself which makes the Universe dead to him? What other course could he have gone through than this that has been? Does not St. Paul affirm the necessity of a falling away?

R. I am tempted to say, that can apply only to times that are past; but I am silenced by the thought that I should only assert that *I* could not be deceived.

W. Is the world now so good, religion so triumphant, piety so pure and living, that we, of all ages, alone may say we cannot be mistaken?

R. If it be true that the world is redeemed, there is no longer such mystery in God permitting error; even error that might embrace ourselves. It no longer involves consequences which we cannot face.

W. True. To believe the absolute redemption gives us patience, not only for ourselves but for the world. Patience is one of the fruits of faith.

R. God does suffer error, inconceivable, unutterable, long enduring. We cannot shut our eyes to facts. It is part of God's discipline of the world

that men should err: should feel sure they have His truth when they are upholding their own thoughts.

W. Is not this, in brief, the history of Christianity: Christ and the Apostles proclaimed the absolute redemption of the world, conjoining it with that firm assertion of death, and condemnation, and judgment, from which it is inseparable. But when the first Christians, who had received this belief mixed with much ignorance, came in contact with the world, with philosophy, they lost it. They found men busy with the question of good and evil; and the Church fell as Man had done. They gave up the Gospel—the death of all and the absolute redemption of all; and took in its stead the natural opinion, the philosophical doctrine of the future well-being of a part and the ruin of the rest; accommodating to it the Christian doctrine of faith in the best way they could. That is the death of Christianity. The conscience was the chief agent in it. The Christians re-adopted the heathen view of man's life and probation, instead of the Christian one of his death and salvation. The difference between these lies fundamentally in the conception of humanity. The Christian Manhood is different from the heathen: the one accepts this; the other asserts a higher.

R. Then you do not reject the everlasting punishment of men on the ground that it is opposed to reason?

W. No. I could not. I hold that doctrine to rest wholly on human opinion. It is a result which

flows from our natural impressions, and has been imposed on the New Testament thereby: we see it there because it is in our thoughts. How could I deny it to be a natural opinion of mankind when it is stated most explicitly in heathen writings anterior to the New Testament?

R. It is Plato's doctrine. The everlasting misery of the worst part of mankind is clearly set forth in the *Phædo.*

W. Nor do I see any escape from that opinion, except by accepting the scriptural representation of man. My hope for the world is in that which is written, of "God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and come to a knowledge of the truth." Does God will that which shall not be? And besides, I see in Christ a revelation which makes me know that this is man's death: a state from which he is to be raised, not an experiment.

R. But why do you lay such stress upon the saving of all men? You speak as if, supposing that were not, there were nothing.

W. I feel so. It is that which saves me. The knowledge of that is the turning point of life and death, of the possibility of absolute self-abnegation.

R. Is it so great a difference?

W. So great? Does not your heart bound with exultation at the thought that you might, doing no violence to any principle you have learnt to revere, giving up nothing of reverence for justice, of hatred to sin, of value for the Saviour's sacrifice, believe the salvation of the world? In knowing that, a burden as

great as that of our own sins is taken from our hearts, a joy-giving and sanctifying power, not less than that of our own forgiveness, diffuses itself through the soul, and makes itself felt in the life.

R. Let me put you on your guard against a misapprehension to which you might be exposed. Do you mean to imply that the absolute redemption of men can be believed only on condition of accepting your opinions respecting the physical world?

W. Emphatically I do not. If I might be so misunderstood I thank you for remarking it. The absolute redemption is to be believed on the ground that the New Testament affirms it, and may equally be believed by all. But I think that the view I have suggested of nature is essentially a Christian one. If science teaches us man's deadness, how can we but see in Christ a Redeemer from death? I think that false opinions respecting the world have prevented us from accepting the plain statements of the New Testament, therefore I have brought my attempt to show those opinions to be false into connection with those statements. I seek only to rectify a connection which already exists, not to establish a new one. What I affirm is that men do read the New Testament according to their opinions respecting the world, and that they misread it because those opinions are not true. With better theoretical opinions they would cease to coerce its words.

R. There are innumerable other questions I might ask you:—What is the exact meaning when you speak of deadness in man? how, then, are we to con-

sider man as existing? what relations does he bear to the other existence in the universe? why should there be death in him, and how can it be without infringing on the perfect goodness of the world?

W. These questions are most legitimate; but I cannot enter on them. They belong to another sphere of discussion. Even if I granted (which I do not) that no answer could as yet be given to them, I could not admit that the argument I have carried on would suffer in the least. I have undertaken to give evidence of a fact—deadness in man; the explanation, or reason of it is wholly another question. I cannot consent to mix up the two; nor to make any thoughts I may entertain respecting the latter a mere pendant to the discussion of the former. First let us determine whether it is true that man's deadness (or defect) is the cause of his feeling the universe to be dead (or defective). If we answer that question in the affirmative, a new inquiry lies before us:—What is the meaning, what is the cause, what are the relations, of this fact? I should be most happy to enter upon it.

R. But is not the word death, or deadness, an undesirable one to use?

W. To me it seems of all terms the best. But the word is unimportant; if you object to it, dismiss it from your thoughts, and take up the question without it. This I say: Man feels that which is apart from him to be inert, not because it is as he feels it, but because of his own condition; if his feeling were true, he would feel himself in presence only of existence that

is spiritual; it is through a want in him that his feeling is caused to be untrue. This is my position. Let the question of deadness be put aside. If I have erred in using the term, the issue raised and the arguments have just the same force and value, the same claim to be weighed and answered.

R. I think you have a right to take this ground. Perhaps I might as reasonably call on a geometrician to explain space before I would receive his demonstrations, as insist on your explaining why and how there is a want of life in man, before I admit the fact. The question is one of evidence, not of explanations.

W. I seek to place it on this ground; but it is not necessary to avoid the other, if the distinction between the proof and the explanation of a fact is borne in mind. I will tell you briefly, what appears to me a possible view. May not the death of man be the loss of a lower, for the bestowment of a higher existence? may it not be a necessary condition of his life, because of the very nature of life as involving Love and Sacrifice? May not this deadness be a result of an act of sacrifice; itself part of the universal life? —death relatively to man, but absolutely life? Is not all the life that we know based on death, and springing out of it? Is not every life purchased at the cost of other life? Except a grain of wheat die, does it not abide alone? Has not science, also, taught us this? Life for life, it is the law of nature. Why is not man's death a mode in which this law of love appears? But do not let these speculations

influence you; my argument is the same whether they be true or false.

R. There may be indications of a reasonable treatment of these subjects, and whatever thought is true must bring us into the presence of more and greater unsolved problems than that of which it gives the solution. If your view left none such, it were self condemned. But let me ask one more question. How is it that we see in geology so long a course of *physical* existence before man existed at all?

W. Do you really feel that to be a question?

R. I am half ashamed to ask it. You would say, that is the phenomenon. It is the spiritual that is physical to us.

W. In the same way we see how it is that we think and feel by physical brains and nerves. I base the proof of my position on its practical success in solving problems. This is ever the ultimate proof. Let a proposed view be put to the test, and see how it will work.—Surely it is the very *reductio ad absurdum* of the hypothesis of matter, that we must, on that view, attribute our consciousness to material changes in the brain as its true cause, and conceive that there is some place, or point, at which a mechanical impulse, or chemical process, becomes a sensation or a thought. But on the view that the physical is the mode in which the spiritual is perceived by man, this strange fact assumes an entirely new aspect. It ought to be; it might be foretold. For if the true cause of our consciousness is spiritual action on us, how should it appear to us? Evidently as physical

action. Brain and nerves, or something equivalent, ought to be the "phenomenal" instruments of consciousness, if this view be right.

R. I must think farther about this.

W. Let it pass. But is it not evident that man must, naturally, at first take a view of all things which makes himself the centre, and must he not afterwards attain a view which includes a recognition of his own position as subordinate? is it not necessary that he should first be confident in his own impressions, and afterwards learn to correct them by a consideration of himself? I seek only to take this step. It must, at some time, be taken.

R. I see that the latter mode of thinking is the more humble.

W. And is it not also the more rational? Is it possible that we can be right in continuing to set up ourselves as the standard of existence? No other course is possible at first, but the delusion exists only that it may be escaped from.

R. That which it has been right for men to do formerly, it may be right for them to cease doing now?

W. Does it cast blame upon the past to say that it has prepared for a better future? You see what we do in thus altering our view. All phenomena remain the same, but we transfer our thought of *existence* from them to something that is more and worthier than they. They are as they were before to our impressions and our use, but their relation to our thought is altered. We think of them not as the

cause of man's experience, but as being present to his consciousness through the operation of a true cause, more real, more certain, more adapted to produce the known effects, than they.

R. This also I understand. Might you not express your conception thus:—Physical things are to our touch but are not to our thought, as *appearances* are to our sight, but are not to our touch? Our thought should be of one thing, while our sensuous impression is of another. That which is to our sense is less than that which IS, and, considered in and by itself, must, therefore, be unreal.

W. So we constantly associate all our consciousness with the operation of existence above that which our impressions represent. Our thought and regard are ever directed to the spiritual, which alone we recognize as Cause. We live now in the spiritual world, and find it perfectly simple that the physical is but the phenomenon, and not the fact. The difficulty would be to think otherwise. To do so we should have to ignore the convictions that are most certain to us. To forget that we are in a world that is spiritual, surrounded by BEING that is Holy, we must put away the feeling of our own defectiveness, the assurance of God's infinitude, the consciousness that there is ACTION around us; we must silence the reason, stifle the conscience, crush the heart, enslave ourselves to sense against our better knowledge.

R. We act by appearances as existing to sight; may we not act by physical things as existing to touch, remembering, in each case, that that which

exists is different from that of which we have the impression? And as we rationally explain our impressions of sight by our relation to that which is to our touch, so may we not seek a rational explanation of our impressions of touch in our relation to that true existence which we know must BE? If we find it so simple that we consciously *see* that which does not exist, may we not find it equally simple that we consciously *touch* that which does not exist?

W. Here you approach, again, the true secret of the difficulty that is felt in giving up the existence of the physical; our consciousness of action in it, and upon it. This it is that makes it real to us. Merely passive impressions, such as those of sight, we have no difficulty in understanding to have no existence corresponding to them. But if our active impressions, or those of touch, have truly no existence corresponding to them, then we must recognize defect in ourselves; we must regard our *self* in a different light. This is the very point of the argument. If physical things are demonstrated not to have true existence, then an unsuspected defect is demonstrated in man.

R. So your argument has been, to prove that that which is inert cannot be that which exists.

W. Yes. Keep that question fairly before you. If that which EXISTS cannot be inert, then it is defect in man which makes him feel himself in a physical world; he is not truly so. And all the practical inferences which follow claim a practical regard.

R. But there is one point more. In our action on

the physical, all men alike perceive the results of that which each individual does. If I move anything, it is moved to all men's perceptions, not only to my own.

W. You do right to make this remark. The individual action has relation to man's universal conscious perception. Not merely an individual but an universal relation is involved. Deeper bonds unite men to their fellows, than upon our ideas we should have suspected.

R. Is not this another question which needs future investigation? Can you explain how this community of perception takes place, according to your view?

W. Only theoretically. And I especially wish to avoid weakening my argument by having recourse to theoretical explanations. I prefer to leave that question, altogether, as a matter for inquiry. I need not again remind you that unexplained circumstances do not weaken the force of a sound argument. One chief advantage of a truer mode of thinking is that it opens new channels to our thought. Nor need I point out to you that there are easy ways of reconciling this particular circumstance with that which I affirm, if we demanded plausibility alone.

R. Rather than give an explanation unsupported by proof, you prefer that it should stand as a circumstance not accounted for?

W. I do. The more unexplained facts we clearly apprehend, the more hopeful is our prospect of increasing knowledge. But think whether our entire

experience is not such as it should be, if the inertness is due to man ; not one or two things, but all that we are conscious of or perceive. Must there not be an unvarying phenomenon, under cause and effect, felt by us as real? must not this impress us with the feeling of force, correspondent to the inertness within? and could "force" be other than such as it is in this phenomenon, which we call the physical? Does it not obey "necessary" laws, laws conforming to the reasonable faculties in man? Must not force, indeed, be conformed to, and determined in its operation by, the resistance it implies? And is not this uniformity, of passive force controlled by force—force as it were self-controlled—the very mode under which holiness should appear to a being to whose apprehension the *action* is wanting? Does it not speak to us of the control of passion in ourselves?

R. That is a striking fact. In nature no force, no passion, is uncontrolled.

W. An absolute rightness greets us there. Therefore we love it so, and trust it: the Manhood in us claims brotherhood with the Life around. Our uncontrolled enslaving passions, only, separate us from nature. And how well and naturally we understand that a holy action, an act of Love and Rightness, is the sole cause of all that is. No accident to baulk, no passive law to crush, no deadness abhorrent to our souls, mocks us or constrains. One cause for all, alike for all. The hairs of our head are numbered, nor falls a sparrow to the ground without our Father. All is God's act and deed: weighted with the infinite

Necessity which is His sole prerogative; constrained, but by His love alone; inevitable, but because He is Holy.

R. Should we say of each thing that affects us, each operation of which we are conscious on ourselves: This God does; His act is the cause of my feeling thus? and if we ask, why it is, answer ourselves: "it must be by His Nature?" and in tracing physical necessities, remember that we are tracing the evidence of his unchangingness?

W. Long ago was the question asked: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? Science has answered it; He does.

R. That is not enough.

W. It is not. HE is not only holy. If righteousness looks down from heaven, truth springs up from the earth. Righteousness and peace have kissed each other. God gives life to man, His life for man. He has shown us what He does, and why. So we can rest and trust in Him. The reason of all things is that man must be redeemed. If in all our sorrows, all our joys, we could but think of that!

R. 'Tis time there came some change in our present thoughts. The world is tired of its endless round. Who is content?

W. I do not know. There are many who try to make themselves content, who think it a religious duty. But who will fairly look upon the world and say: I *am* content?

R. I would not be the man. Unless, indeed, it is true that God is redeeming man, and that all this

history is the destroying of the death within him. If I could believe that, I should be happy.

W. You would be. You could not help it. The power of an overwhelming joy would carry you along, compelling you to throw all your heart and soul into God's work. It would save you to believe; to believe in Christ, THE REDEEMER OF THE WORLD.

THE END.

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